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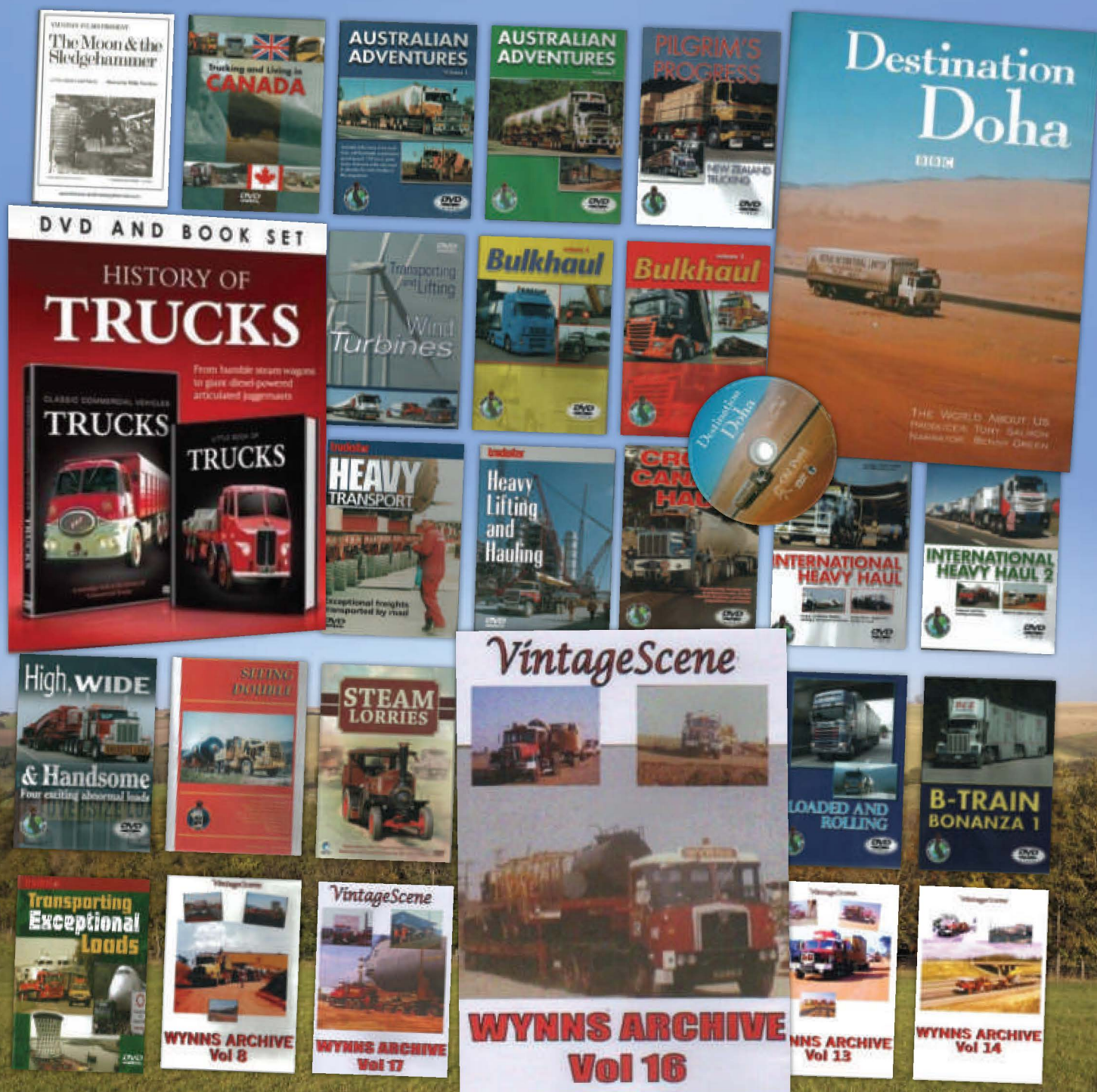
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CC16003 Volvo FH, Curtainside Trailer, V.G. Mathers, Inverurie, Scotland, new tool £68



CC16004 Volvo FH, Eddie Stobart - cab only, new tool £45



CC16005 Volvo FH, Step-Frame Trailer, Anderson new tool £68



CC16007 Volvo FH, Maxwell Freight "Liberator" cab only, new tool **NEW** £45

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CORGI

Corgi Collectables - Cars



VA10816 Ford Capri 2.8i Special, Rosso Red £21

OXFORD

Oxford Diecast - Cars



43JAG9004 Jaguar MkIX Black/Imperial Maroon £19



43RRP3001 Rolls Royce Phantom III SdV HJ Mulliner Black £20



43RRP5001 Rolls Royce Phantom V James Young Navy Silver £20



Looking forward to the 2017 rally season, a new restoration or two always appears on the circuit. In 2016, we had the much anticipated ex-works fleet Foden 'Twin-Load' from Tony Knowles, seen here on the London-Brighton Run. Also standing out among the many interesting lorries at South Cerney was this 1961 AEC Mammoth Major Mk 5, XYP 136 – possibly ex-Shellmex & BP – restored as an AEC Works Vehicle, with a beaver-tail body, carrying 1932 AEC Mammoth Major, KJ 5723, ex-Bretts Quarries, Kent, in need of some TLC. I wonder what will be new on the scene this year...



Welcome to the February issue. We're well into the New Year now and looking forward to the start of this year's rally season, although events do seem to continue through the winter months these days.

What many of us have considered the season opener, the Classic Commercial show previously held in March at Malvern has now been incorporated into the Spring Tractor World Show, one of the nation's biggest vintage, veteran and classic tractor and machinery shows, held indoors and outdoors at the Three Counties Showground in Malvern on February 25th and 26th.

There will be club stands and classic commercial displays over both event days plus the main Classic Commercial display on the Sunday. Classic truck or van owners can pre-book to display for the weekend within the tractor show or, alternatively, just turn up on the Sunday morning before 9.30am and display at the show. No need to pre-book for Sunday-only display, just turn up in your classic commercial.

Successful for the last 15 years, the Spring Tractor World Show is one of the UK's largest trade gathering of specialist vintage tractor spares and parts companies and trade stands plus tools, models, literature, restoration consumables and so on. It's the first major vintage show of the season and a highly anticipated event on the events calendar.

There will be over 500 tractors and machinery exhibits, including classic commercials and

vans, Land Rovers, horticultural and garden exhibits, stationary engines, model displays and miniature steamers. On the Saturday, H J Pugh and Co will hold a vintage auction, with over 2,000 lots expected, on Sunday there will be the annual vintage 'sort out and spares day' and charity tractor road run into the Malvern Hills. The event is sponsored by our publishers, Kelsey Media. More details can be found in the advert elsewhere in this issue.

Back to this issue, we have some interesting stuff for you. I've been thinking about the subject of workshops for 'Scenes Past' for some time, but once I got started on the feature, I realised just how much there was to look at and talk about. And there's enough pictures in the archive for another go at a later date. Meanwhile, we've started a new series from Phil Read, whose career began in the workshops and later included writing for Commercial Motor and publicity for vehicle and components manufacturers. He's looking at the various types of lorry available on the market in particular years, which is going to jog a lot of memories.

Similarly, Malcolm Bates has found one of those 'How to...' books on driving from 1946. Comparing some of the recommendations in it with the situation today really makes you think. Progress... well, maybe... See what you think.

Talking of memories and what readers think, our postbag is bulging. We have some

very interesting letters and pictures for you this month, and I've just received a batch of mail held up by the holidays, so next month's 'Scene & Heard' pages promise to be just as full of good stuff. I have to say I am very glad that so many of you readers want to get involved in the magazine in this way. Thank you very much, it really is much appreciated – and I'm not talking about just 'filling the pages', what you write is really interesting and adds so much to the magazine. As always, I hope you enjoy this issue as much as we have putting it together.

ON THE COVER...



We start a new series looking at specific types of vehicle available in a particular year. This time it's four-wheelers in 1965, and a new model on the market was the AEC Mercury with the new Ergomatic cab, as seen in this striking view of an early delivery to British Road Services, which will jog a lot of memories...

DENNIS F8 MILES WATER TENDERS

Ron Henderson tells us about a version of a successful Dennis with a body from another fire appliance manufacturer.



Above: The prototype Miles Dennis F8, photographed before delivery to Shropshire Fire Brigade, which operated five in total. The combination of panoramic windows and jack-knife crew doors was a characteristic feature unique to Miles fire engines.

Dennis Bros of Guildford introduced its small F8 appliance in late 1950, to meet specific requirements for an appliance with a restricted overall width, suitable for use in rural areas. The appliance made its debut at the Commercial Motor Show at Earls Court, London in September 1950.

It was claimed by the makers that the extremely short 10 ft wheelbase and narrow 6 ft 6 ins width made the appliance ideal for rural service. It was powered by a six cylinder Rolls-Royce petrol engine and capable of carrying a crew of five and up to 300 gallons of water. The pump was a rear-mounted Dennis 600 gallons per minute two stage turbine unit with horizontal primer.

The design turned out to be one of the company's most successful post-war appliances, with some 255 being produced for both the home and overseas markets. It became the standard appliance of the



Above: Worcester City & County Fire Brigade bought three Miles Dennis F8s, but with departures from the standard design. They featured additional doors for the two front riders and had swivel locker covers, which hinged upwards and recessed into the bodywork. This one still survives. (I Moore)



Above: Peterborough still maintains one of the few English volunteer fire brigades. Its Dennis F8 Miles is shown next to an earlier Dennis F7, with the front assembly of a similar pattern to Dennis-bodied F8 appliances. (N Tarling)

Northern Ireland Fire Authority and became known there as the 'Ulster' model.

In February 1954, Alfred Miles & Sons Ltd, of Cheltenham, introduced a fire appliance based on the F8 chassis, but fitted with Miles coachwork, which was a total departure from the complete appliances that were built totally in house by Dennis. Alfred Miles had begun building fire engines in 1950, originally on Commer chassis and later Bedfords, all with characteristic bodywork built to the same design, which included jack knife doors for the crew cab with no separate doors for the driver and officer in charge, unless specifically requested.

Equipment was stored in four large lockers with roller shutter covers. Alfred Miles pioneered the use of aluminium in its fire engine construction and the use of high grade aluminium alloy in the construction of the Dennis F8 appliance achieved a saving of nearly one ton in body weight, despite accommodating a 400 gallon water tank and twin hose reels.

In appearance, the machine was totally different from the ones produced by Dennis as, to accommodate the curves of the standard Miles bodywork, a completely new front assembly had to be designed and fitted over the original Dennis front scuttle.

The first orders received were from Shropshire, for two appliances, and single units for both West Hartlepool and Denbigh & Montgomeryshire Fire Brigades. Durham County Fire Brigade ordered three and neighbouring Northumberland County Fire Brigade ordered the first of its ten water tenders.

Northumberland's appliances were

unusual. Designed to the same specifications as the brigade's larger Commer/Miles water tenders based at the whole-time fire stations, they were supplied without main pumps. A small 20 gallons per minute first aid pump, driven by a power take off was fitted, to feed the two hose reels but, instead of the customary rear mounted main pump, a wartime surplus Sigmund-Morris light trailer pump of 150 gallons per minute capacity was carried inboard of the appliance at the rear, while a second pump was towed behind.

The ten appliances were stationed at part-time rural fire stations where water was in

short supply. In the mid-1960s the machines were all modernised and underwent a conversion to the rear bodywork, to provide a large full-width locker, accommodating a pair of self-contained Coventry-Climax portable pumps, which could be operated in situ or remote from the appliance.

Other single examples were sold to brigades in Wallsall, Huntingdon & Peterborough and the South West Area of Scotland, for Annan fire station. Worcester City and County ordered three and repeat orders from Shropshire brought this authority's total to five. Two examples went to the Irish Republic at Galway and Dun



Above: West Hartlepool Fire Brigade was the second authority to order a Miles Dennis F8. It is pictured at the brigade's Stranton Fire Station, after the two Hartlepoons merged in 1967. An unusual characteristic of Hartlepool's fire engines was the Chief Fire Officer's name painted on the side.



Above: This Guernsey F8 is carrying a heavy Merryweather 45 ft 'gut buster' ladder, introduced to replace the traditional wheel escape ladders. This one still survives.

Laoghaire and one to Guernsey.

Unlike the standard Dennis version, which was sold to many overseas customers, only one example of the Miles-bodied F8 was exported overseas, to Singapore, for service with the colony's Harbour Board.

The last three Miles machines were ordered by Northumberland County Fire Brigade in



Right: Northumberland was the biggest user of Miles Dennis F8s. This was the first of ten, delivered in 1954. Despite having the original County Council coat of arms on the side, it was pictured when in service with a private works brigade. The new rear body extension is evident on this appliance, which is another that currently survives.



Above: Wallsall's sole Dennis F8 gained a second career, when it was sold for further service to Platt, Sacco Lowell's factory at Accrington. (B Duckett)

1957, making up a total production of 30 Miles Dennis F8s. Thereafter, the company concentrated on Bedford J chassis for its smaller appliances.

The Dennis-Miles F8s were good reliable appliances, built by two reputable companies, although the cabs were cramped. Access for the driver, being through the rear jack knife doors, was somewhat hampered by the engine protruding into the narrow cab.

Northumberland's appliances lasted in service for an incredible 29 years, with one being sold in 1988 with just 11,899 miles on the clock. The longevity of these appliances has ensured that several of the Northumberland machines have survived into preservation, together with others from Shropshire, Wallsall, Denbighshire, Galway, Guernsey, Worcester and Shropshire.

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SUDDENLY ITS 1965 - and you're buying a two-axle lorry

Phil Reed looks back at the lorries that were available to operators in the mid-1960s.

What better way to promote the new model than to show it in a major operator's colours? This AEC publicity picture shows a brand new Ergomatic-cabbed Mercury platform-bodied four-wheeler in BRS livery. This must have been one of the first deliveries.



Then, as now, in the tough world of transport, lorry buying decisions would have to be based on hard facts – not just intuition. Today, it's hard enough to pick from the nine truck makers (DAF, Isuzu, Iveco, MAN, Mercedes-Benz, Mitsubishi, Renault, Scania and Volvo) which could supply you with a two-axle lorry in the over 5 tonne gvw sector.

Now imagine how difficult it must have been in the 1960s, when there was double the number of makes to choose from. If I had gone a year or two later than 1965, then the choice would have been even harder, as there would have been a whole slew of imported trucks to further complicate the hypothetical 1965 buyer's decision.

OK, I know that there was at least one Volvo and a very few Mercedes lorries running in the UK in 1965 (as an aside, I think the first Volvo came to the UK as early as 1963 and was trialled or bought by a London-based builders' merchant). However, these were vehicles sent by the manufacturers to the UK to assess their suitability in our demanding market conditions. Both Mercedes-Benz and Volvo – along with many other importers – then started their UK truck sales efforts after 1965.

Also, to make the choice available to the hypothetical 1965 lorry buyer more realistic, I have ignored two very small, very obscure manufacturers, which have long appealed to me, as there are virtually no accounts of them anywhere. Both Baron and Mack (a British

company, which was entirely independent of the US Mack operation) developed and built a few trucks in the UK, which were primarily aimed at export markets. In any case, it is arguable as to whether either of these two manufacturers were still in business by 1965.

I have also excluded Douglas, Unipower, Shelvoke & Drewry, Thornycroft (which had by 1965 dropped all its general haulage chassis), Scammell (which, if asked, would probably build you a two axle 4x4 truck, for off-highway duties) and the all UK's many other small specialist chassis manufacturers who catered for applications such as military, timber haulage, mobile cranes, dumper trucks, fire appliances and other off-highway sectors.

Even allowing for these qualifications, give

Right: The new model quickly established itself. Here a 1967-registered AEC Mercury four-wheeled tipper, MHW 482F, is seen in a West Country operator's livery.

Below: Well-known on rally fields for many years, in its Federation Ales livery, RVK 50F survives as a typical AEC Mercury 16-tonner.



separate makes. Yes, it doesn't make any sense and no, it didn't then, but that's how it was. In 1965, the long process to move away from Austin or Morris badging to that of BMC was continuing. However, this was a huge task, which also involved rationalising BMC's vast commercial vehicle and car dealership networks. This made it a very protracted process, moving towards a single BMC badge, which had not been fully achieved by 1965.

The result was that, seemingly randomly, it was possible to have Austin, Morris or BMC badging on your new 1965 lorry. At a distance of over 50 years, I can only guess that the badge applied to the vehicles depended on the factory where they were made and which of the three franchises the supplying dealer held.

Similarly, there will be some among you who

or take, in 1965 there were 18 UK based manufacturers of two axle general haulage chassis to choose from. If you do not believe me – how's this for a list:-

AEC, Albion, Atkinson, Austin, Bedford, BMC, Commer, Dennis, Dodge, ERF, Foden, Ford, Guy, International, Karrier, Leyland, Morris and Seddon.

Now, I'm sure that eagle-eyed readers, with a better memory than I, will spot that I have inadvertently omitted some other obvious manufacturer(s). And, at this stage I should say that Mike, like every other editor I have worked for, always welcomes input from better-informed readers – primarily so that he can shout at his humble scribes about their ignorance and further reduce their rates of pay. (It's all lies, apart from welcoming readers' input – Ed.)

You might also say that there is no sense in including BMC, Austin and Morris as three

Right: Another publicity shot, from a couple of years later, showing the cab of an AEC Mercury, pretty advanced for its day – as long as you didn't compare it with a Swedish model – with the British Leyland badge to the fore.



will argue that including Commer and Karrier as two separate makes is also 'over-egging the pudding'. I disagree, and there is a good reason for this, in that Karrier concentrated on smaller lorries, mainly but not exclusively, for the municipal sector.

As such, Karrier offered both its municipal and distribution fleet customers compact, low-loading chassis lorries. And, to further set itself apart from its larger stablemate, Karrier also continued to offer its version of the FC cab, introduced in 1948, long after Commer had stopped using this compact, but elderly cab design.

Alphabetically, what two axle haulage chassis were being offered by each manufacturer in 1965?



Above: The new Ergomatic-cabbed AEC Mercury replaced the previous model, which needed a coachbuilt cab, like the one on this Park Royal-equipped 1962 example, 4834 MW, from the Bowyers of Trowbridge fleet.



Left: The Ergomatic cab was also used on a new model launched by Albion in 1965, the Super Clydesdale 16 ton four-wheeler. This example from a couple of years later, LUE 568E, was in the fleet of J C Walters of Nuneaton, with a Homalloy tipper body and Edbro twin rams.

Below: Albion's range included the Chieftain and Clydesdale four-wheelers, with the LAD cab. This example, with a four cylinder diesel engine, AWU 961B, went into service with Sanders of Leeds in 1964.

Let's start with AEC – and what a start this is! The year 1965 was a seminal one for AEC: as a then recently merged member (1962) of the Leyland Motor Corporation (LMC), this was its year of out with the old and in with the new. It was also the beginning of the end of the Southall-based company's long-standing reliance on outside coachbuilders, such as Park Royal and Tillotson, for its curvy, elegant, non-tilting cabs.

As the year progressed, it saw traditional AEC models being gradually being phased out in favour of its new – and it has to be said, very angular – LMC Sankey-built Ergomatic tilt-cab range. This cab was introduced at the 1964 CV Show, for AEC, Leyland and Albion trucks. However, I'm pretty certain the respective Ergomatic-cabbed ranges only sold in tiny numbers to key customers until well into 1965.

Underneath this new tilt cab, AEC had extensively re-engineered chassis, engines and transmissions – and thus AEC's reputation as 'King of the Road' seemed to be secure for the long term. And, with the launch of its Ergomatic range, AEC moved up to being a supplier of maximum gross weight vehicle in the two, three and four axle rigid sectors. So, if you were shopping for a new two axle Ergomatic-cabbed



AEC, it would most likely be a Mercury and it would be a 16 ton gross chassis.

Albion, another LMC member, similarly had a good 1965. With its lighter Chieftain four-wheeler and up to 16 ton gvw Clydesdale model, complemented by the specialist distribution, three-seat, easy-entry cabbed Claymore, Albion was enjoying record sales in the mid-1960s. Many operators appreciated the marque's well engineered, lightweight,

no-nonsense specification, which offered about the best-in-class payloads.

Traditionally, Albion's haulage four-wheelers sported a very basically trimmed, long door version of the LAD cab. What typical Albion drivers of the time thought about their vehicles was another and probably unrecorded matter.

Though I can guess, as a regular Albion driver in the period, that his opinion could have been something along the lines of "*****!! *****!!

Right: Albion continued to offer its Chieftain four-wheeler with the LAD cab, like EXS 483F, of Galbraith's Stores Ltd, of Paisley, with a Pengco 'Load-O-Matic demountable body, used to delivery groceries, fruit and vegetables to its branches.

!! *!!". My word, an Albion LAD cab interior was a very basic, noisy and comfortless affair. But, as an efficient and economical load carrier, few other lorries could come close to an Albion – resulting in its popularity with fleets of all sizes.

In 1965, Albion buyers and their drivers would now benefit from the introduction of its new Ergomatic-cabbed range of four and six-wheelers. These offered the advantages of far better engine access, combined with improved levels of driver comfort and greatly reduced in-cab noise levels.

I believe that Albion's version of the Ergomatic cab was less well equipped than those used by AEC and Leyland. Albions with the new Ergomatic cab tended to be specified for long haul operations, while the LAD cab soldiered on



Left: Albion also offered the Claymore, a lightweight four-wheeler, with the engine under the floor, allowing a three-man cab, ideal for multi-drop work, although the model struggled to compete with the likes of cheaper Bedford and Ford models. ANF 369B, now preserved, started life with Manchester Fire Brigade.

for many more years on tipper, skip loader and other short-distance work.

Albion power came from the Leyland 400 engine, with the lighter weight Claymore being the last bastion of the company's own four cylinder engine, which boasted Scottish levels of parsimony when it came to fuel economy.

Atkinson, even in 1965, was hardly a volume producer, although the company benefited from a small group of loyal customers. However, by 1965 the days were over when an Atkinson customer could ring the works



Above left and right: Never a common sight, Atkinson four-wheelers, like preserved 894 MKL from 1960 and NW 466E from 1967, in Longson livery, both photographed in the 1990s, tended to be specified by users of heavier vehicles by the same maker.

Right: Bedford's TK models were used by all sorts of operators for many years. This mid-1960s model, designed to work at 12 tons gross, was fitted with a Hiab loader and heavy-duty body for a Dunstable scrap merchant.

at Walton-le-Dale and ask that they run him up a lightweight four-wheeler with Gardner's dinky little 4LK engine. In the past this type of chassis had been a slow-selling adjunct to the Atkinson range.

By the mid-1960s, the company's main market was in eight-wheelers and maximum weight tractor units and, at that date, Gardner 6LX engines were the Atkinson customers' power unit of choice. In the world of two axle lorries, Atkinson was a very niche market player, the bulk of its production in this sector being Gardner-powered trucks designed to operate at maximum train weight with a draw-bar trailer.

Whether it was designed for solo or draw-



Left: For operators who preferred a normal control vehicle, notably those in export markets, but also a significant number at home, Bedford's TJ was probably the most popular available in the mid-1960s – and long after.

Below: Bedford TK-based tippers were the mainstay of many fleets during the 1960s, before they were eclipsed by a move to larger vehicles.

bar operation the majority of Atkinson four wheelers had a six cylinder Gardner engine of between 112 and 150 bhp, a David Brown gearbox and a Kirkstall Forge rear axle. They also had a very stylish glass fibre cab. Introduced in the late 1950s, this cab had benefited from a process of continuous improvement and, by 1965, provided a comfortable driver environment.

For Austin, see BMC in the next instalment.

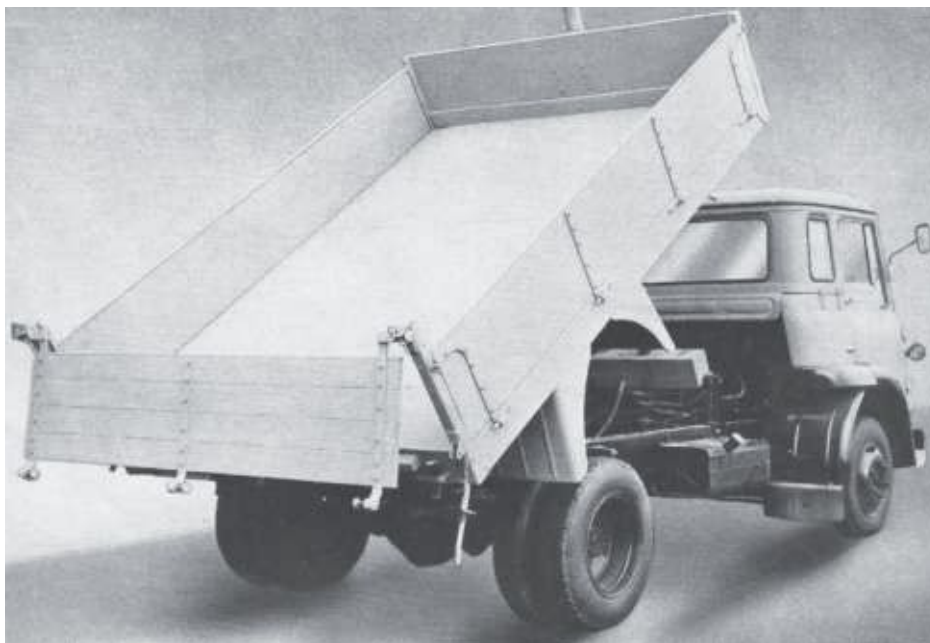
Bedford, in 1965, was the threat to all non-premium manufacturers in the two axle sector. The company's decades of ruthless analysis of costs, materials quality and component weights meant that it was a good quality lorry, at an exceptionally competitive price. As a result the company was riding high in 1965. Who could have guessed that by 1986 it would be all over for the Luton-based company?

The 1965 Bedford buyer had a huge choice of TK models – which offered a high level of driver comfort, by the standards of the day. Or, if a normal control lorry appealed, then there was a wide range of bonneted TJs available. In





Above left and right: Many well-known larger fleets included Bedford TKs, like these operated by supermarket giant, J Sainsbury, a common sight in many high streets, with their temperature-controlled box van bodies.



Above: Bedford's TK range included models at the lower end of the weight scale, like this 4-5 ton tipper, which would have had a four cylinder 200 cid diesel engine.

Right: Bedford did not enter the 16 tons gross maximum weight four-wheeler market until 1966, with the KM models, at that time instantly recognisable by their double bumpers.

addition, there was the original 'Big Bedford', as the RL still remained in limited production for civilian applications, mostly in 4x4 formats. The chink in Bedford's armour was the lack of a 16 ton gvw chassis – which would not be addressed until the launch of the KM range in 1966.

Even so, Bedford's advertising strapline "you see them everywhere" was true. TKs were used as local distribution vehicles, on long-haul duties, vast numbers served in the construction sector, while British Road Services, Pickfords, the Royal Mail, Post Office Telephones and British Railways all had huge fleets.

The bonneted TJ was not so ubiquitous,

but there were more than enough in service to make them a common sight – especially with utility companies, who appreciated the availability of a line-built 4x4 version of this medium weight vehicle.

Dependent on model and weight, Bedford's engine choice included smooth running 214 or 300 cid (cubic inch displacement) petrol engines, both of which could trace their lineage back to the mid-1930s. Bedford's diesel line-up included 200 cid four cylinder and 330 cid six cylinder engines. These were more or less 'unburstable' – though, as with many other engines of the time, they were not at their best with high speed motorway work.

Even in 1965, I believe it was still possible for operators in search of more power, to specify the option of a Leyland 400 engine in the TK, but only in tractor units.

● *To be continued.*



Maltese Survivors

Michael Baker spotted plenty of British vehicles still working in Malta.

Visiting parts of our world where the Union flag once fluttered as though it was set for the long haul is always instructive, especially for those like me, on the lookout for remnants of the time when our motor manufacturers were assured of a ready-made market.

In a previous article in issues 194-6, I recalled encountering Leylands and Bedfords in profusion in Pakistan and India in the 1960s, as well as Afghanistan, where Britain attempted and, as all readers of Kipling will recall, failed miserably to assert authority.

Later, in the 1990s, I discovered a large fleet of Optare Metroriders in Kuala Lumpur, the Malaysian capital, and in a trip up country to the Cameron Highlands, where tea was grown and processed with machinery brought over from Belfast in the 1930s, we travelled in an elderly Mercedes belonging to the Regal Bus Company; one wondered if the name had been inspired by Southall-built vehicles which had once featured in the fleet.

There is a famous tea-house and country hotel in the Cameron Highlands which would have made a perfect frontispiece for a 1930s collection of John Betjeman poems. While my wife and I sat there taking tea and scones



Top, left and right: Front and rear views of the 1930 Bedford, still in use of tours, and loading in the city square in Vittoriosa, Malta.



Above: A Bedford TL being used to deliver construction materials at a building site in Vittoriosa, Gozo.

and wondering if the Giles Gilbert telephone box was operational, a Morris Minor drove past. We would hardly have been surprised to hear a voice shout: 'Cut' and order the car to make another pass until the shot had been perfected. Or perhaps it was part of a panorama and came past every three quarters of an hour.

Hong Kong is, of course, perhaps the best-known colony where many generations of UK commercial vehicles have found a home, and also the only place in the whole world which operates a fleet composed entirely of

double-deck trams, once commonplace in the UK. The compliment was returned, when the preserved tramline at Birkenhead had two specially-built ones shipped over.

In November, 2016 I visited another former UK island colony, Malta. Roughly the same size as the Isle of Wight, the comparison doesn't end there. While the Isle of Wight is basically green and Malta is mostly brown and pale yellow, there are other similarities, not least red post boxes and telephone boxes, English is one if the two official languages and vehicles drive on the left.



There is also a surprisingly large collection of UK-built commercial vehicles still at work and, while I wouldn't suggest this survey is in any way exhaustive you may, dear reader, find it diverting.

There was a time when the extensive bus routes, serving some three quarters of a million people, were worked by highly distinctive, privately owned vehicles, many of UK manufacture, but greatly altered and personalised by their Maltese owners. These, other than those in preservation, one of which passed through our home town, Wareham, during the Olympic flame procession 2012 – not quite sure what the connection was – are now gone.

The Maltese government took control and awarded Arriva the contract to operate all buses in Malta and the adjoining island of Gozo. This upheaval was not totally satisfactory and, in October 2014, the contract was awarded to Autobuses Urbanos de Leon. In 2015 this company introduced 142 Turkish-built OTOKAR single-deckers, which form the largest part off the fleet, although there are also some Mercedes. Adorned in a

Above: Another Bedford TL, fitted with locally-built bodywork, on its way to Gozo. In good condition, it doesn't make as much of a contrast with the modern Mercedes taxi as would be expected.



Above: An Austin or Morris FG with dropside body, also appearing to be in good condition, parked in Mellieha.



Left: Another Bedford TL, parked near the bus station in Valetta. Fitted with a lorry loader, the cab has been given some of the personalised paintwork Maltese vehicles have always been known for.



Above: An Ergo-cabbed Leyland – with the British Leyland badge above the later-style grille – with a high-sided body suited to carrying a substantial load of building material, seen in the streets of Victoria, Gozo.

rather plain livery of white with a pale green flash, much of the fascination which the Malta bus scene had for the enthusiast has gone, but it's probably a great relief to the population and the ordinary tourists, on whom Malta depends to keep its economy buoyant.

Then there are the privately-owned coaches, and a good few of these are of UK origin with Plaxton bodywork. There are even some open-top double-deckers, which the government at first frowned upon, but now permits on various sight seeing duties. These, like some of their drivers, started their lives, fully clothed, in the streets of London.

But what really caught my eye was the quite considerable number of UK-built lorries, going about their business all over Malta and Gozo, examples of types now normally only seen at home at rallies. The construction industry seems to be particularly reluctant to part with, not just the Leylands and Bedfords

which, one assumes, must once have been favoured above all other makes, but also the rather rarer ERF. None of the Maltese Leylands or Bedfords can be less than 30 years old, but those I saw looked in excellent condition and certainly not yet ready for the scrapyards.

Far and away the oldest Bedford was a little 1930 vintage bus, with locally-built body, which I actually, by dint of persevering, got to travel on. It was difficult to track down. Rumour that it existed led to enquiries in the main tourist office in Valetta. There, I was told, and it seemed rather to the lady in charge's surprise when she consulted her screen, that the vehicle operated every day, from Sliema, down on the waterfront. She did not, however, have any brochures.

One of the regular routes from Mellieha, where we were staying, the 222, terminated at Sliema, so off we went. No sign of vintage buses but plenty of kiosks advertising boat

trips and one of the gentleman in charge assured me the bus did, indeed, run every day and he would sell me a ticket, at a discount. Never one to pass up a bargain, a deal was struck. The trip was due to start at 11 am and we were warned to get there early, next morning, not later than 10.30. Which we did. But the bus didn't. Consulting my ticket, I noticed that, rather than having a specific date, it was 'open'. None of the boat people was able to offer an explanation.

The next day was Saturday, which seemed perhaps a better proposition so once again we boarded the 222, arrived at Sliema and there, parked, quietly behaving itself in a layby, was the little Bedford. We climbed aboard, where three Germans were already in their seats, gave it a thorough inspection, which included my lowering an offside window right down out of sight and not being able to raise it, which was a pity as it was raining gently, but steadily. More passengers arrived, a Lithuanian family took the seats beside the open window, I explained, fortunately not having to resort to my non-existent Lithuanian, the driver appeared, collected tickets, produced a screwdriver and raised the window, and off we went.

The journey was great fun, particularly as I was able to command the seat immediately behind the driver, a jolly fellow called David. He provided a commentary and spent much of the journey, which encompassed the extensive dockyard



Above and circled: This coach seen on Gozo features an ERF chassis, fitted with a locally-built body.



Above: Another Leyland Ergo, the body of which is probably a tipper, but not always used as such, being unloaded by a Coles mobile crane at a building site in Mellieha.



area which dominates Valetta, really three separate towns known as Conspicua, Singlea, and Vittoriosa, sounding his horn at friends and acquaintances and receiving greetings in return en route.

While on the subject of the docks, another vintage journey to be recommended is a trip across the harbour to Vittoriosa – the little Bedford gives its passenger a 20 minute break in the beautiful square there – in one of the beautiful traditional ferries, rowing boats fitted with outboard motors. The one which conveyed us dated from 1951. Its proud owner, a third generation sailor, his father having served in the Royal Navy, when we admired the brilliant colours and the glistening woodwork, explained that it had taken eight layers of wet and dry and



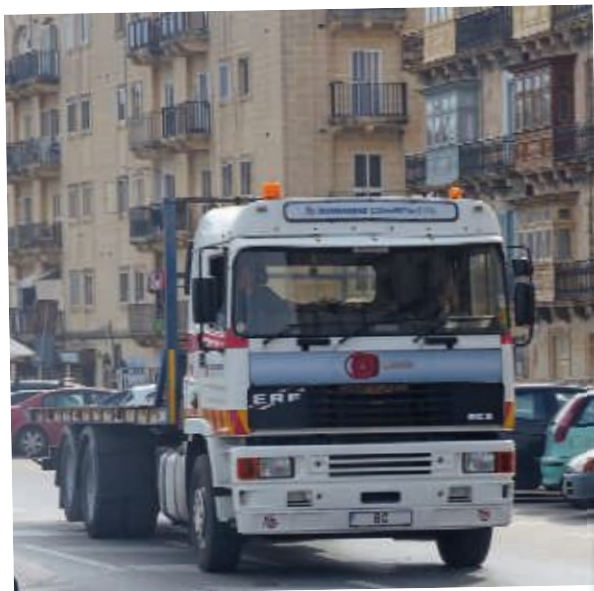
Above: An ERF cement mixer, seen delivering in Victoria, the capital of Gozo.

varnish.

Back on the bus David told me he had been driving it for 26 years, every weekday: 'My wife would kill me if I worked on Sunday.' This



Above: A Ford Transit ice cream van working in Valetta. This is fitted with the 'diesel front' panel used on the early Mk I Transits fitted with the longer Perkins diesel engine. Wonder if this one still has it?



Left: An ERF EC Series six-wheeled platform lorry with lifting rear axle seen in Valetta.

Right: An ERF C Series four-wheeler, probably a stretched tractor unit chassis, fitted with a capacious and sturdy-looking tipper body, loaded with rubble, parked below some typical Maltese balconies.

did not quite square with the number of days over the two weeks I was in Valetta when there was no sign of the bus, but perhaps Mrs David had him otherwise occupied then and not just on Sundays.

I also travelled in another British-built vehicle. The island of Gozo is a 20 minute ferry ride from Malta – a big ferry suitable for trucks, cars and buses – which runs every half hour. We took a coach tour of the island and I was most surprised to see the initials ERF embossed on the steering wheel and repeated on the instrumental panel. Now it was news to me that ERF, based in Sandbach, Cheshire, had ever produced a coach chassis. But that wasn't the only ERF coach I saw on Gozo. In its heyday, ERF had always had quite a substantial export business, but was



Above: A splendid-looking Austin or Vanden Plas Princess limousine, dating from before 1968, used by the President of Malta, engaged on official government duties.



Above: An ice cream van, based on a now rare Ford 'A' Series chassis, looking as if it was laid up ready for the next summer season.



Above left and right: A former London Leyland Titan, now converted to open-top, used on sight seeing tours, with traditional ferry boats in the foreground.

Right: An ERF EC Series artic carrying a container waits for the Gozo ferry, along with a Leyland Cruiser bulker, another ERF and a later Leyland DAF.

Below: A Ford Cargo carrying poles reminds us of vehicles used by British Telecom a few years back.



eventually taken over by MAN in 2000, and the later vehicles were really MANs with ERF badges. The last of these appeared in 2007.

The more I looked, the more ERF lorries I encountered, both on Gozo and Malta. Among other makes there was a Scammell, a Coles mobile crane, several modern Dennis dustcarts, one of the curious little Austin/Morris FGs, the last of which was built in 1968, which I saw on several days, going about its business, early in the morning in Mellieha, a Morris Minor pick-up, a mobile fruit and vegetable shop on a Bedford, a vehicle rather popular in Malta, various British-built Fords and Volvos and the inevitable Land Rovers, a good few of which



Above: A Leyland Boxer fitted with a mobile catering body positioned ready for business in Victoria, Gozo.



Above left: A Leyland Cruiser six-wheeler fitted with a high capacity tipper body and wide tyres on the front axle (to cope with the weight?). Is the ERF badge on the front panel giving it an identity crisis? **Above right:** This Leyland tipper, helping to build another hotel, has the wide T45 cab of a Roadtrain or Constructor eight-wheeler, but looks like a six-wheeler – a stretched tractor unit?

Right: A Leyland Freighter skip loader still putting in a day's work in Valetta.

Below: On tourist duties, a Plaxton-bodied coach, dating from the 1980s, along with a traditional Valetta horse-drawn carriage.



Above: A more modern Leyland DAF artic seen in Sleima.

Right: These Plaxton 3500-bodied coaches have brought the soldiers assembling for the Remembrance Sunday parade.

Below: A Bedford TK dropside forms the basis of a mobile greengrocer's shop in Mellieha.



Above: A classic coach with bodywork inspired by the Plaxton designs of around 1970, with a front-engined chassis, apparently fitted with an AEC 505 engine, passing a modern Otokar bus in Mellieha.



Left: This classic Maltese bus, with typical-style bodywork, badged as an AEC Reliance – and who are we to argue – now seemingly preserved and acting as a souvenir shop.

must have been 50 years old if they were a day.

And it's not only the vehicles which were of UK origin. We came across a driver sitting disconsolately on the dual carriageway leading to the Gozo ferry, beside his lorry which had shed a tyre – Maltese vehicles always look well maintained and this could have happened to anyone. We commiserated with him. His accent brought us up with a start. 'Are you from Glasgow?' we asked. 'Aye, been living in Gozo for thirteen years. I love it,' came the reply.

We'll let the pictures tell the rest of the story...

DAKINS REMOVALS

David Watts tells the story of this Nottingham-based company, for which he worked during the 1960s, with some tales from those days...



Above: Here is a Mark 15 chassis fitted with an integral pantechnicon van body with Luton head. The stylish factory front panel has been retained by the bodybuilder, as have the twin wraparound front screens. But the cab doors and that rear quarter-light window are coachbuilt. The 'laid back' Luton head matches the curve and angle of the front screen nicely, suggesting this was a well-thought-out design. But oddly, there is no rear overhang drop well, as one might expect to find on a furniture van.

Federick, James and John Dakin, trading as Dakin Bros Ltd, founded a soft drinks firm in 1900, a transport company in 1919 and a food production unit – about which little is known – in 1936. John's two sons had taken over by 1939, with Gordon getting transport and Stanley taking food and drink.

The soft drinks firm was sold around 1941-2 and the transport company was nationalised in 1948, with Gordon buying the removals side of Hopwells Furnishers, plus its Talbot Street furniture repository shortly afterwards.

When the BRS monopoly of long-distance haulage was eased in the early 1950s, he set about expanding the firm and added general and contract haulage to the company portfolio. To show his contempt for state control of... well, anything ... he put 'This pantechnicon is

operated under private enterprise' on the front of his vans, though this was discontinued by the time that I worked there. I wonder if any archive pictures of this provocative slogan survive?

The moribund food unit closed in 1960 and, following the disastrous 1969 repository fire, the last Dakin Bros enterprise was sold. This was soon after I left. I think that Marshalls of Nottingham took the haulage side and Wm H Short of Newthorpe, near Eastwood, bought the removals side – I would welcome confirmation on this point – a sad end for a long-established company. Gordon and Stanley Dakin, who were in poor health at this time, both died comparatively young in 1971, aged 68 and 63 respectively.

My life on the road began in the late 1950s, when I exchanged coal-mining for a more open

air life with Dakins Removals of Nottingham which, despite the title, also undertook general and contract haulage.

The company's fleet consisted of eleven pantechnicons, two flatbeds, a canvas tilt, made up of no less than seven – eight if you count the Morris-Commercial 10 cwt runabout – different makes; five Seddons, three Leyland Comets, two Thornycrofts, two Jensens, and one each of Ford Thames, Dennis and Foden – so not all pantechnicons were based on lightweight chassis. As the firm expanded, more Seddons arrived, although Gordon Dakin couldn't resist buying another Comet, with a hugely-extended chassis, a Bedford and a most unreliable Albion Claymore.

Compared with my previous job, I found the freedom of the road, plus working in daylight and fresh air, most enjoyable. True, the work

was hard, the hours often illegally long and the pay poor (very poor compared with mining) as the owners' organisation, NAFWR (National Association of Furniture Warehousement & Removers) claimed that we made our wages up with tips... well, maybe. But, on the other hand, every day was different, whether it be local or long-distance removals – Dakins really did live up to its 'Cover the Country' logo – or Boots shop deliveries to either East Anglia or the South Coast, while at least one van per day went down to London.

However, I did eventually leave for a better-paid C-Licence job – we even got dinner money, to compensate for being unable to use the subsidised works canteen!

Before going down the pit, I had delivered new furniture for a local shop, so I knew the basics of the removal trade and soon learned how to pack china and glass without breaking anything – well, not much, anyway. I also soon learned that this outwardly respectable firm sailed pretty close to the wind in some respects. Gordon Dakin was very much a law unto himself and showed scant regard as to which of his vehicles could legally carry what goods.

For instance, the two 'removals only' Jensens proved ideal for carrying such light and bulky items as car seat frames to Ford at Dagenham and lorry mudguards to Dodge Motors at Kew with, as likely as not, a return load of McVitie's biscuits, from the company's bakery at Park Royal – not, of course, that we were the only firm to indulge in such practices.

The same easy-going attitude also applied to such niceties as driving hours and speed limits, then only recently raised from 20 mph to 30 mph. It was quite common for us to do London and back in one long day which, after factoring in the time spent running around an even then congested capital, plus loading and unloading time, wasn't legally possible in those



Above: Four of the accompanying pictures were taken in front of the War Memorial, Victoria Embankment, in the early 1960s. This one shows, left to right, edge of the Ford box van, Seddon tilt, two Leyland Comets and part of the Foden.

pre-motorway days, without exceeding one's hours and breaking the speed limits.

But if you flout the rules you have to ensure that you don't get caught by an MOT check. There wasn't much you could do if you were carrying the wrong sort of cargo and the inspectors told you to: "Open up, let's have a look in the back." There is no magic formula for turning five tons of McVitie's biscuits into a vanful of furniture. But mostly they were just 'hours worked' checks and you got around this by simply carrying two log sheets: a factual one showing the hours that you actually worked, for pay purposes – later destroyed by the company – and a 'legal', but in reality, completely fictitious one to show to the inspectors, though some preferred to leave the latter one blank until the end of the day, as the fine for a blank log sheet was lower than that for falsifying an official document.

Another dodge, to avoid 'silent checks' – when MOT staff sat in their cars, recording the

registration numbers and times of passing lorries, without actually stopping them, was to return by a different route to the outward journey. Of course, the inspectors knew all our tricks, but it was up to them to catch us – just as it was ours to outwit them. Not that we were ordered to break the law, but GD was not above putting you on a 'flat week' for a time, if you 'let him down', as he put it. Oh, come on, don't pretend that you didn't know such things went on!

I can't remember exactly what our pay was after over 50 years, but it was something in the region of 4/6 (22½ pence) per hour, for a 44 hour week – just under £10 a week – with weekday overtime paid at time and a quarter, and time and a half for working on a Sunday. Two other sources of income, both extremely variable, were tips and – honestly – coins found under three-piece suite cushions, behind pianos and suchlike. Tips were always shared – woe betide anyone caught fiddling – but any odd coins you found, it was a case of 'finders, keepers'.

Customers were charged by the hour, to the nearest 15 minutes, depot-to-depot, for local removals. When I started, this was 25/- (£1.25) for a van and three men and £1 for a van and two men. The cheaper option was really a false economy, as the job simply took longer. We would normally do two average-sized removals a day – people didn't have as much 'stuff' as they do nowadays – at about four hours and £5 each, though larger houses obviously took longer and cost more like £10. I read recently that the average cost of a removal was now a remarkably precise £1,111 – wow!

Long and medium distance removals, plus really big local jobs, were always undertaken on fixed price contracts, based upon the amount of property to be moved and the distance involved. The usual procedure was to partly load on the afternoon of the first day, complete loading, travel and part or fully



Above: Possibly Foden UTO 445 and definitely bonneted Seddon SAU 940 enjoyed a second life on the fairground circuit – the latter being the last Dakins vehicle that I ever saw, parked in winter quarters at Bobbers Mill, Nottingham, in the early 1970s.

Intriguingly, this might be the vehicle of which the front end can just be seen in one of the smaller pictures on page 24 in the April fairground feature, behind a Leyland Comet and a Tilling Stevens – perhaps the picture could be enhanced or maybe you can find a better one? Bonneted Seddons were rare in the UK, though I believe they sold well overseas, and the only two I ever saw were both pantechinons, ours and one operated by Metal Box at nearly Sutton-in-Ashfield.



Above: Dakins panthechnicons on R6-engined Seddon, Leyland-engined Seddon, Seddon Mk 6 coach chassis, two Jensens and extended-chassis Trader.

Below: R6-engined Seddon, bonneted Leyland Comet (blast that car!) another Leyland Comet, Seddon Mk 15, Seddon Mk 7, Dennis Pax and Thornycroft Nippy Star complete the fleet line-up.

unload on day two and return on day three.

Our main competitors for this type of work were Pickfords, Nottingham Co-operative Society – do you remember when most Co-ops had a removals department? – and Nolans, which later sold out to Hoult's of Newcastle-upon-Tyne although, thanks to Dakins very competitive prices, I'd say that we did more long distance removals than these three put together.

For example, we'd do a three-man London area removal for as little as £40 which, according to our customers, was something like half of what our rivals quoted. Sometimes they'd say that they didn't know how the firm made a profit at such prices, but we assured them that, as the boss bought a new Bentley every two years, he must be doing something right. Not that he used it much, it spent most of its life in a corner of the garage, covered with a dust sheet. I only went in it once, when he took me out to a job that had gone seriously awry. What a ride: 80 mph through the city centre, weaving in and out of the other traffic and overtaking blind – talk about showing off!

Long distance work meant nights away from home, of course, when we had the option of going into lodgings or sleeping in the back

of the van. Never mind today's sleeper cabs, with all their amenities, we had to rough it; no electric kettles, microwaves or mattresses for us. Actually, sleeping in the van was illegal, as the law stated quite clearly that rest period had to be taken away from the vehicle.

But, while most towns had a usually run-down area, where you could find cheap transport lodging houses, many of them left a lot to be desired, even by the low standards of those days. Poor food, few, if any amenities and double beds – which you might well have to share with a complete stranger – crammed into every available space. The worst that I ever encountered was in Oxford, dirty and unheated in mid-winter, you had to put a 'tanner' (2½p) in the meter for hot water and meals were served in another hovel down the street. Still, with a miserly subsistence allowance of only 8/6 (42½p) per night, you could hardly expect the Ritz Hotel, could you?

So most of us carried a bedding roll and slept in the back of our pantechnicon. It wasn't too bad in summer, but it could be very cold in winter and, of course, there were no toilet or washing facilities. I shudder when I think back to how we lived then; we must have been a hardy breed...

Obviously, most of our work was fairly local, either within the city of Nottingham itself or one of the neighbouring towns. The shortest distance job that we ever did was when a man who lived in a second floor flat above a shop sold his piano to the young lady who lived in the second floor flat above the shop next door. We had to hump it down a double outside staircase and then, after a brief pause to get our breath back, carry it up another outside staircase two yards away. And it ended up with its back up against the wall that it had stood against in the first place, so it had travelled about – how thick is a wall? – twelve inches from where it had started from – pity that we couldn't just knock a hole in the party wall...

Beside the normal number of removals that we handled, Nottingham had recently embarked upon a massive slum-clearance and re-housing programme, which generated a huge amount of extra work, not only for us, but also our competitors – no do-it-yourself with a hired Transit in those days.

One thing I learned was that just because people had the misfortune to live in sub-standard housing, it didn't follow that they lived in squalor. Actually, some of the filthiest houses that I ever went into belonged to middle-class professionals – and many housewives would give the house a last clean before they left, regardless of the fact that the next visitor to come calling would be a man driving a bulldozer...

Alas, there are always exceptions to any rule and one house, right opposite my own childhood home, as it happened, was not only filthy, but stank of urine (even the carpets squelched underfoot – ugh) so we just looked at each other and shook our heads, told the bewildered householder that she'd have to find



somebody else and drove away. We thought we'd get a rocket when we got back to the depot and told GD that we hadn't got any pennies for him to put in his piggy-bank, but for once he congratulated us for doing the right thing, which was in itself a novelty.

At the other end of the social spectrum, we had the Park Estate behind Nottingham Castle, an exclusive gated community, originally built for such wealthy Victorians as John Player, the tobacco magnate, and Jesse Boot – who was actually a herbalist, not a chemist – although by the late 1950s, many of these grand villas and mansions had either been converted into high-class flats or even torn down (such short ives for such magnificent houses) and replaced by blocks of luxury apartments.

In my younger days, I had roamed this peaceful, traffic-free haven, admiring these extravagant properties, but had never for one moment dreamed that one day I'd see their grandiose interiors, with their ornate ceilings, marble staircases and galleried upper floors.

Once we moved a dentist from his house-cum-surgery on the edge of The Park and, while checking his desk for breakables before moving it, we came upon a very explicit framed photograph of his absolutely stark-naked and very attractive young receptionist – we certainly didn't get treats like that every day! She probably wondered why we spent the rest of the day smiling broadly whenever we saw her...

Then there was the time that Charlie Skinner was reported for drunken driving by an irate resident, quite unjustly, I hasten to add. He'd just been given a brand-new Seddon Mk 15 pantechnicon – which I'm 90% sure was the one seen here and in the 'Rare Ones' publication – and to avoid scratching its gleaming paintwork, he'd followed a somewhat zig-zag course along the tree-lined roads.

Another time, we'd been hired by an estranged husband, to collect his possessions from the family home, but his angry wife



Above and below: Two views of Seddon Mk 15, YAU 581, on the Basingstoke-Alton road in 1959 and Jensen TAU 309 outside the depot in the 1960s.

threatened to set the dogs onto us, if we weren't off the property within 30 seconds... She wasn't joking either; you should have seen Gerry Foulkes, Bill Collins and me, running down the drive, which suddenly seemed much longer than when we'd gone up it, pursued by two furiously snarling hounds, only just making it through the gate in time.

We same three moved a retired bachelor professor from his large house in The Park, to his spinster sister's in Wiltshire who, coincidentally, was also a retired professor. I've never known anyone who owned so much furniture, plus the thousands of books which he'd accumulated over his lifetime, all of which had to be carried down a steep flight of steps to the van. It took us two full days, ably assisted by a fourth man on the second day, to load Seddon Mk 6, MTV 249, one of our largest pantechnicons.

Even then, we couldn't get it all inside the van, so we had to hang the walk-in tailboard on its chains and packed what was left up against the closed doors. We weren't happy about doing this, as a similarly-loaded Dakins van had previously shed its load, thanks to

poor roping, but we didn't have much choice in the matter. We set off the next morning, travelling very slowly, and soon built up a long 'tail' of frustrated motorists. We finally arrived at the sister's house – she nearly fainted when she saw how much there was – and did a part-unload, finished off the next day and thankfully returned home.

Right at the start, Gerry had prophesied that this would be a 'dry' job (no tip) and he was proved right, in fact it was so dry that we were not even offered a cup of tea over the entire four days. Even our ploy of asking if there was a café nearby where we could get a drink fell on deaf ears. Our only consolation was that our hapless professor was still being angrily berated by his furious sister for bringing so much stuff down with him as we left, and I must say that we heartily agreed with her.

Every so often, and in his usual autocratic manner, GD took it into his head to shuffle all of the crews around and it mattered not a whit that maybe we were quite happy as we were. The last long distance job I did with Gerry was when we, and Walter Sheppard this time – Bill had been 'shuffled' already – took a van-full of badly dented and very rusted metal lockers from Chilwell Ordnance Depot, near Nottingham, to – no, not a scrap metal dealer – an artillery range at Milton-of-Campsie, north of Glasgow.

It's not as if the recipients appreciated this generous gift either. They'd been given to understand that we'd be delivering new ones. Depending on which way you look at it, this was either a complete waste of tax-payers' money or, from our point of view, a jolly three dasy 600 mile round trip with overtime which, thanks to the glorious weather, we all enjoyed immensely.

On that cheerful note, I'll end part one. Next time, pianos, window work and other vanished jobs, plus Dakin's biggest ever removal.



EX-WORLD WAR II MILITARY VEHICLES ON THE FAIRGROUND – Part I



Harry Crooks' Matadors, 271 GRP and Q718 GBG, seen at Pinkneys Green in May 1994.

Showmen's AEC Matadors

Richard Furniss brings us the first of a series of articles looking at the popular subject of ex-War Department vehicles operated by showmen.

The AEC Matador, both in 4x4 form, (0853 chassis) and 6x6 form (0854 chassis) was quite possibly one of the most successful British-built military vehicles produced during, and immediately after World War II. By the time production officially ended in November 1945, almost 10,000 examples had been built, mainly for the three main branches of the British armed forces, although some were supplied to our allies in the conflict, including Russia. A few hundred more were built in the early 1950s, until they were replaced by the AEC Militant and other models.

A few early examples were fitted with the A193 petrol engine and designated Model 853, the vast majority of Matadors were supplied with the 7.7litre oil (diesel) engine, rated at 95 bhp, and designated



Above: The Harris Brothers from Ashington in Sussex still travel with a fleet of Matadors. Here three of them are parked together at Ardingly in July 1994.



Above: Harris Bros' 1967-registered example, WPX 925F, fitted with a later-type cab, photographed after a re-paint, back in 1994 at the Great Dorset Steam Fair. **Below:** Shown coupled to their chair-o-plane load at the Great Dorset Steam Fair in 2005 is another of Harris's Matadors, UBL 173.



Model (0)853 or (0)854 in the case of the six-wheelers which, incidentally, were fitted with the Marshal rear bogie.

The Matador (0)853 was classed by the War Department as a Medium Artillery Tractor, usually fitted with a general cargo body, and normally used to tow various sizes of field guns. However, other bodies were also fitted for specialised purposes. The majority of the six-wheelers were fitted with fuel tank bodies and used as aircraft refuellers, while others had Coles cranes mounted on them.

Although a great number continued serving with the military well into the 1960s, there was a surplus which was not required so, during the mid to late 1940s

and '50s, continuing into the 1960s and '70s, many of these, together with various other types of military vehicles, were put up for auction at a number of ex-Ministry of Defence sales held throughout the country. As these vehicles were mainly low-mileage, with their renowned reliability and pulling power, they were eagerly snapped-up by civilian operators, including garages, bus companies, timber contractors and, of course, travelling showmen.

In the years prior to World War II, most showmen were still using steam road locomotives and early petrol-driven lorries in order to fulfil their transport needs so, obviously, the Matador, with its

economical diesel engine and four wheel drive capability, coupled with a 7 ton capacity winch, made an ideal replacement for both fairground and circus operators alike. Consequently, a great many entered fairground use, throughout the late 1940s, '50s and '60s, with a number of showmen operating more than one example.

In the immediate post-war years the legal maximum width for road vehicles was 7 ft 6 ins, but the front axle width of the Matador was three inches more than this. Because of this, the Showmans Guild was given special dispensation, in order to allow them to use Matadors on the public highway. However, by 1948, the legal width was increased to 8 ft.

With a top speed of less than 30mph and with only 95 bhp on tap, Matadors were

Below: Harry Amer's Matador, VAR 460E seen at Beaconsfield in May 1980, was little changed from its military days, apart from the addition of a generator in its otherwise standard body. Its 1967 registration plate suggests a late 'demobbed' tractor.





Above: Hatwell Bros' Matador, OBW 231 seen at the Banbury Steam Rally in 1994, currently believed to be awaiting restoration. This Matador was registered in Oxfordshire in 1948 and, apart from the larger mirrors, headlights and flashing indicators, plus the addition of caps on the rear wheels and, of course, a repaint, appears very much as it would have done in its military days, with its standard gun tractor hooped body. As will be noticed, the lighting-sets have now been removed. **Below right:** Many Matadors were altered considerably while in showland use, probably none more so than FNU 275H, which belonged to Raymond Armstrong, seen below pulling-on with the dodgem box truck and pay-box, in readiness for the 1988 Nottingham Goose Fair. Turned out in typical Armstrong style, it looks as if the tyres have even been blacked for the occasion! This Matador was retired soon afterwards.

obviously rather slow on the road, especially with a train of heavy wagons on tow so, as general traffic speeds increased during the latter half of the 20th century, most showmen began replacing them with faster, more powerful vehicles, although there was little to touch a Matador when the going got tough! To the best of my knowledge the Sussex-based Harris family are the only showmen currently using Matadors in their

business.

My earliest memories of fairground Matadors date back to the early 1950s when, as a young boy, I used to watch Hatwell Bros pull-on to the High Street of my home town of Shipston-on-Stour, Warwickshire with their Gallopers for the annual June fair. The prime mover for the galloper loads was their Matador named Quo Vadis, which was used with the gallopers until, I believe,



Above: Whereas the majority of fairground Matadors appear to have been first registered for civilian use during the 1940s and 50s, a number were not released until the 1960s. An example from this era is 3744 JH, belonging to Hampshire-based showmen, Stokes Brothers, seen here sporting a replacement AEC cab at Stourpaine Bushes in September 1980.

1977. Hatwells also used an ex-military Guy Quad Ant for a short while. This was a most unusual vehicle to be seen on the fairground, and although I recall seeing the Guy, unfortunately I have never come across a photograph of this particular vehicle.

The Matador now belongs to Matthew Hatwell, grandson of Buller, youngest of the Hatwell brothers and regular driver of Quo Vadis until it was replaced by a Foden tractor. It brought back happy memories when it appeared at the Banbury Steam Rally in June 1998 as seen here. I believe the tractor is currently awaiting restoration.

Whilst in fairground use some Matadors were very little changed from their military days, with perhaps the addition of one or two generators being mounted in their rear bodies. A typical example of a Matador like this was owned by Harry Amer, photographed whilst generating for the owner's dodgem track at the Beaconsfield Charter Fair in May 1980.



Above: The Redditch-based Wilson family ran three Matadors from the late 1940s. Whereas two had been pensioned off earlier, the third, which was named King George V, remained in regular use until the early 1980s. Here we see it on the Sunday morning pull-on for the annual Oxford St. Giles fair in September 1980. At the time, it carried a Luton body which included staff sleeping quarters. I believe FWP 899 is currently parked up at the firm's winter quarters, minus the body.



1: John Coneley was still using GFH 108 well into the 1980s, but here it is seen laid up at his winter quarters at Stonehouse, Gloucestershire, some time during that decade. **2 & 3:** Gloucester-based showman, Billy Danter ran three Matadors during the 1960s and '70s. The third, MTG 491E, was bought at the MOD Dispersal Sale at Ruddington in December 1966 and was in use with the family until 1978, before being laid up. The Matador was obviously held in high regard by the family, as it has recently been restored to a very high standard by Billy's son, Edward and grandsons. It is seen below at the Churchdown Fairground Extravaganza in January 2015. **4:** A Matador which was still in fairground use well into the 1990s, 4333 BH, named 'Warrior', was owned by the Beach family, and seen here at Chalfont St Peter in July 1995.

Observing Stevensons of Spath - while still a country bus service

Clive Baker looks back at this independent bus operator in its heyday from the enthusiast's point of view.



Above: Down from London. Ex-London Transport, Leyland Titan 6RTW, KLB 908, climbs the steep hill away from Tutbury, a township served by Stevenson's throughout the company's existence. It was operating on the free service to commemorate the 90th Anniversary, this 'all-Leyland' model was sold into preservation in 1977. In the distance is ex-London AEC Routemaster, RM1168, now owned by local operator Midland Classic, also taking part in the commemoration. Stevenson's did operate a Routemaster from 1981, the vehicle being an ex-Northern General front entrance version, new in 1963.

The name Stevenson's of Spath is, to many PSV enthusiasts, synonymous with a variety of elderly buses, painted in a variety of liveries, with the principal theme colour of yellow, serving the rural areas of Staffordshire situated between Burton upon Trent and Uttoxeter.

Founded by former farmer, Mr John Stevenson, in 1926, what would have been the company's 90th anniversary, had it not been sold to Arriva in 2006, was celebrated on Sunday, 11th September 2016. The public was offered free bus rides in preserved ex-Stevenson's vehicles, along their old route between Burton and Uttoxeter, via Tutbury.

Over the years, control of the business passed through three generations of the family and involved, in the early days, numerous other family members carrying out all manner of related tasks.

The 'rising sun' logo remained a familiar image, in a variety of styles, on the sides of all buses and coaches until the 1970s, when the economy conscious company relied entirely on the predominantly yellow livery and fleet number for identification. Coaches carried the name only, in a number of different styles, as



Above: The 'rising sun' logo appeared in a variety of styles, before replacement by other graphics (or no graphics) during the 1970s. This image is an assimilation and one must assume, as the style seems to differ when viewing photographs of different buses, that this was not registered as an official trademark.

Right: Joining the Stevenson's fleet in 1965 as no 11, KLB 908 leaves Burton bound for Uttoxeter in December 1969. New in 1949, this 6RTW carried two different bodies during its time with London Transport, being recognised by two different fleet numbers, RTW 141 and later RTW 178. On entering service with Stevensons, platform doors were fitted. Other LT type double-deckers in the fleet at the time of this photograph were two AEC Regents III RTs with Craven bodywork and a Leyland 7RT with bodywork by Park Royal.

well as the fleet number.

Also known as the 'Yellow Bus Service', the company worked two main routes between Burton and Uttoxeter, one via Tutbury and the other via Hanbury, as well as some shorter runs to villages in the area, including a working between Burton and Ashbourne. Contract and private hire, particularly school runs, also formed an important section of the business.

During the post-World War II years, when the author followed the company's progress, a fleet of about 30 assorted vehicles was maintained; ranging from up to date luxury coaches, to second-hand double and single-deck buses. Stevenson's sourced its stock from neighbours such as Burton Corporation and Blue Bus Services plus, further afield, from Devon General, Sheffield City Transport and London Transport among others.

Unlike many similar independent operators, Stevensons never owned any of the ubiquitous Bedford OB coaches, probably because of their lack of seating capacity, or that icon of the 'Swinging Sixties', the Bedford VAL. By purchasing second-hand, the company could select tried and tested types, thus avoiding the ill-fated Daimler Roadliner, for example.

All maintenance, including body re-building and painting was carried out in-house at the Spath workshops. Apart from the marques mentioned, there were few that didn't receive

the yellow paint spray and, in earlier cases, the 'rising sun' logo. In fact, as more adventurous liveries, featuring bold stripes that became fashionable in the late 1970s, Stevenson's paint shop was not slow in joining the trend, resulting in some very smart-looking buses.

With a regular turn-over of stock, incoming vehicles would take the fleet number of the one being replaced. For many years, until the company began its rapid growth during the 1980s, the highest number was no higher than 30.

The company's main depot at Spath occupied sites on both sides of the road leading from Uttoxeter to Rocester, adjacent to the ex-North Staffordshire Derby-Stoke railway line. On one side stood the Stevenson family house and a garage for maintenance purposes, converted to accommodate a double-decker, the first of which, Utility Guy Arab II no17 joined the fleet in 1945.

Across the road lay a large square of ground, providing outside parking for the bulk of the fleet. The year 1939 witnessed the establishment of a Burton depot, at the disused canal wharf. There the author can

remember buses parked in and alongside a canal warehouse and, by the entrance with Horninglow Road North, stood a wooden booking office which he believes, when the depot was moved to Rolleston Road in 1963, moved to Spath to serve a similar duty.

The reader will note that Leylands from Sheffield feature strongly among those illustrated. During the late 1970s, Sheffield City Transport was disposing of buses and dual-purpose vehicles, at an age and condition found very attractive to a number of independent operators.

The author's camera started to be pointed at the 'Uttoxeter Bus', as it was known to many Burtonians, in the late 1960s, being very active until the early 1980s, shortly before Stevenson's acquired the operation of the Burton upon Trent Corporation fleet and other routes in broader Staffordshire. Expansion was rapid and an even wider range of vehicles was amassed, the image of the small 30-strong independent disappeared, being replaced by one of a large private transport undertaking.

The pictures here cover ex-Stevenson's PSVs, taking part in the 90th anniversary runs, as well as various others, as they appeared in revenue-earning days during the late 1960s and '70s.

Bibliography:

- 'Stevenson's of Uttoxeter', by A W Peto, D J Stanier and D Penlington
- Bus lists on the web

Left: During the post-war Ford & Slater supplied vehicles to cuder during the post-war years, normal control yellow buses were rare. Apart from a 1937 Bedford WTB, which served at Spath until 1960, Guy Special, no 27, MXX 371, stood alone as the only example. Purchased by Stevenson's in 1965, with its 26 seat body, built by Eastern Coachworks to London Transport's specification in 1954, LT fleet no GS71, a Guy chassis with Fordson-style front body components, proved ideal for working country routes. It was photographed at Horninglow, working a Saturdays only Ashbourne to Burton service in May 1972, when the GS had only a few months to serve before disposal later that year.



Tiger, Titan, Leopard and back to Tiger

Records show that, from very early days in the company's history, many buses and coaches have featured chassis, engine and, in some cases, bodywork by Leyland. From 1936, when Leyland Lion no 8 appeared, until 1984, when Leopard saloon no 24, similar to no 16 seen here, arrived from Lancaster City Transport, products of the Lancashire manufacturer played a prominent part in the Stevenson fleet.

First generation Tigers, no 28, illustrated here, and sister no 22, marked the final days for the half-cab single decker in their locality, whereas Titans, like no 10, also pictured, enjoyed a longer innings, the final example with exposed radiator not joining the Spath-based fleet until no 30 arrived from Rhymney Valley in 1982.

The photograph of later Tiger no 14 demonstrates how the saloon developed in the space of just over 30 years, not only in chassis design, but more particularly in body styling.



Above: With underfloor-engined single-deckers well-established in the fleet, since no 30, an AEC Regal IV with Burlingham body, took its place in 1961, it came as a surprise to note two half-cab additions, as late as 1963. Nos 22/28, GAY 170/1, spent their earlier years from 1950 with Allan of Mountsorrel. Both were Leyland Tiger PS1/1 chassis, with 35 seat bodywork by Willowbrook. This indestructible pair continued in PSV service until 1972, when no 28 took up tree-logging duties, before sale for preservation in 1977. No 28 is seen parked opposite the Rolleston Road garage, in July 1971, before employment on an enthusiasts' private hire trip – many heads were turned en route.



Left: By 1971, larger double-deckers, 30ft in length, began to appear. No 10, 564 FTF, a Leyland Titan PD3/4, bodied by Metro Cammell, was one such vehicle. First supplied to Lancashire United in 1958, the bodywork is an example of early all-steel construction, which includes the front canopy, a component later produced from GRP by its builder for this body style. No 10 is shown turning into High Street, Tutbury on a morning service to Burton. This Titan saw service until 1978, when replaced by the next no 10, a Leyland Leopard.

Below: Leyland Leopard, ex no 16, MFR 41P, with timeless Alexander 'Y' Type 45 seat body, makes a splendid sight, with Tutbury's medieval castle in the background, as she returns to the area where she saw service from 1982. Delivered to Lancaster City Transport in 1976 as no 41, the vehicle was fitted with bus seats but, as the bodywork styling was suited to more prestigious usage, Stevenson's immediately installed coach type seating. Note the more flamboyant colour scheme compared to the earlier, more basic livery applied to no 11 and earlier examples.



Above left: No 14, a Leyland Tiger, UVT 14X, joined the fleet in 1982 along with sister vehicle, no 13, UVT 13X – the first Stevenson's bus to carry that fleet number, with its superstitious connotations. Both were supplied new and qualified for grant status. These powerful coaches featured Leyland's final bus chassis design and carried 53 seat Plaxton Paramount bodies. Photographed approaching Tutbury, this beautifully preserved example of classic styling of the 1970s/80s makes a return trip to home territory to commemorate the anniversary of its first owner.

The New Look

Streamlining to the front end of double-deckers was first introduced in the early 1950s, as a reaction to the newly-introduced and stylish under-floor engine saloons, and in an effort to take away the out-dated appearance synonymous with the Utility Guy Arabs and early post-war buses.

The first 'New Look' or 'Tin Front' deckers to come to Spath began service in 1968; initially AEC Regent Vs, joined by Leyland Titans from 1970, sporting both the manufacturers' early and later styles of concealed radiator grilles.



Above: Photographed at the Burton, Rolleston Road garage, once one of the town's many breweries, the old and 'New Look' front-end styles are evident. To the left, Leyland Titan PD3/1, no 17, 3914 WE, with bodywork by Roe, arrived from Sheffield in 1971 and completed eight years' service. In the centre is no 9, 959 AJQ, an AEC Regent V of 1957 with Park Royal body; new to City of Oxford as fleet no 959, this bus must have been among the final batch to be delivered with exposed radiators. Purchased by Stevenson's in 1970, it was noted while operating school contract runs until disposal in 1978. To the right is the bus with no apparent fleet number. 6349 WJ of 1959 was built to a similar specification to no 17 for service with Sheffield City Transport, fleet no 1349. Carrying a 30ft Roe body, this 'New Look' AEC Regent V was given Stevenson's fleet number 27, and saw a short period of service in yellow from 1972 until 1976.

Above: This morning shot captured in Tutbury shows no 23, 3908 WE, another Leyland Titan PD3/1 with Roe bodywork of 1959, which came from Sheffield City Transport, while working the Uttoxeter-Burton service. The livery adopted for double-deckers during the 1970s featured principally yellow, relieved with black waistband and roof. The name 'Stevenson's' and the 'rising sun' logo were considered unnecessary for vehicles employed on short-haul services.

Right: Still without a visible fleet number and displaying a noticeable amount of tree damage to the front canopy, no 27, 6349 WJ, heads through Horninglow. It was about to pass the site of the canal-side depot occupied by the company from 1939 until 1963. The 30 ft AEC is operating an early morning working from Uttoxeter to Burton.



Under the floor

The introduction of the underfloor-mounted engine by Midland Red in 1948, quickly followed by versions produced by other manufacturers, gave stylists a free hand in single deck bus and coach design.

Such types began to infiltrate the Stevenson fleet from 1961, when no 30, an AEC Regal IV with Burlingham body belatedly took up the trend. Leyland's third such offering, the Leopard was well represented in yellow; no 15 of 1959 being the first of this model, joining the ranks in 1971.



Above right: Leyland Leopard saloon no 2, 6307 W, came to Spath along with sister bus, no 31, in 1972 from what seemed to be Stevenson's main supplier at the time, Sheffield City Transport. From this date, white was being applied around the window bays of new additions to the fleet, giving a very attractive livery to, in this instance, Weymann 44 seat bodywork. New to the Sheffield fleet in 1960 and numbered 7 and 6, both survived until 1980. Photographed at Ashbourne bus station, a market day hub for independent operators, in 1972, no 2 keeps company with a Bedford SB5 sporting Plaxton Embassy body, owned by another still functioning family business, Warrington's of Ilam, Derbyshire.



Above: Once more a Leyland Leopard from Sheffield and again bodied by Weymann, but no 1, 1501 WJ, carries the stylish 'Fanfare' coach body, synonymous with the large tour companies of a previous decade. One might think it strange that an independent bus company should favour the heavyweight chassis as opposed to the lightweight, but during the 1970s, Stevenson's did also operate a number of coaches of the Bedford SB and Ford marques. Sister Leopard L1 to no 1, no. 15, 1500 WJ, also joining the fleet in 1971, held the distinction of being the prototype Leyland Leopard when new in 1959. The Fanfare, usually stabled at the Burton garage, was photographed on school duties passing through Rolleston-on-Dove.



Left: In many cases, when new vehicles joined the ranks, freshly re-liveried at the Spath depot, these vehicles would be put to work the main Burton/Uttoxeter service via Tutbury. For no 18, 5907 W, and no 20, 5909 W, this practise was no exception, as the author clearly recalls watching these two newly-painted Burlingham-bodied Leyland Leopard L1s, passing in opposite directions at Sudbury, in the spring of 1972. Records show that during 1971/2, ten buses found their way from the steel mills of Sheffield to rural Staffordshire.

Pushed from behind

Half-cab domination of the Stevenson double-deck fleet began to decline in 1975, with the acquisition of three Atlanteans from Portsmouth, to be followed in 1979 by a further five from Maidstone.

London Transport, being dissatisfied with the mechanical reliability of the Daimler Fleetline DM and DMS marques, brought about their early demise in the capital. Quick to take advantage, Stevenson's placed a total of 32 such buses in service between 1979 and 1983.

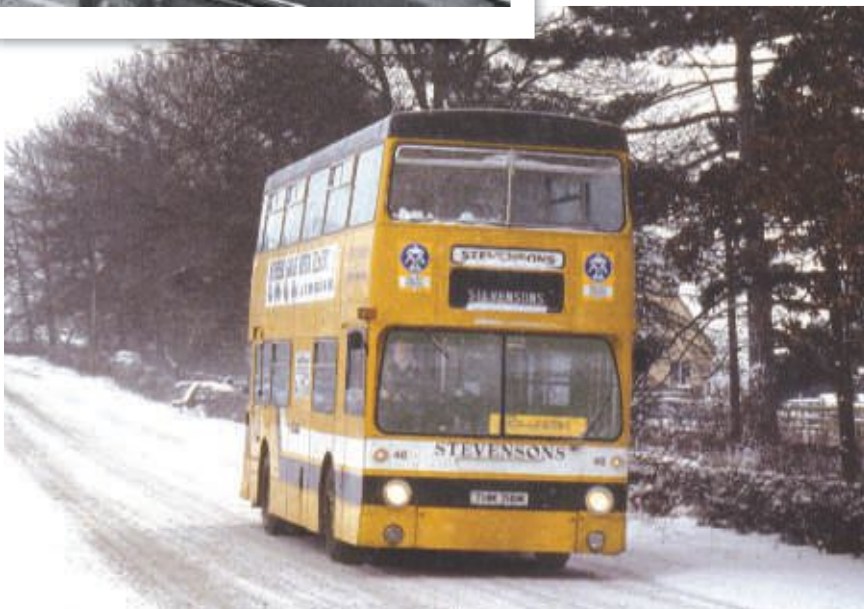


Above: The Leyland Atlantean first appeared in Burton bus-park in 1958, when Trent Motor Traction purchased new rear engine double-deckers. Stevenson's patiently waited until three such buses of 1963 vintage became available for purchase from Portsmouth Corporation. No 14, 204 BTP, arrived in 1975, while nos 7 and 27, 217 BTP and 219 BTP followed in 1976. These Atlantean PDR1/1 specification buses, with 76 seat Metro Cammell bodies, received a plain yellow and black livery with no indication of their new owner, a rather disappointing contrast to the smart crimson and white colour scheme they once wore for the seafront of Southsea. Records indicate that two further Atlanteans of identical specification arrived in 1979, but did not enter service, being sold later that year. The photograph shows a lightly-loaded no 27, leaving Burton bus park bound for Uttoxeter.



Left: A further five Leyland Atlanteans headed north in 1979, but with different bodywork and from a different first owner. Late of Maidstone Corporation, nos 34 and 30 of 1968, and nos 11, 23 and 15 of 1967, carried the not-so-common bodies by Massey, the styling bearing little resemblance to the distinctive lines of previous half-cab products from that supplier. Once more the basic livery was applied, with no owner's name or 'rising sun' emblem on the sides, records indicating disposal of these buses as early as 1981/2. This image shows no 34, OKM145G, previously no 45 in the Maidstone fleet, travelling along Station Street, Burton, with an Uttoxeter-Burton service at a date following the Borough Council's decision to allow services from out of town to pass through the town centre.

Right: No 40, THM 716M of 1973 was one of 32 Daimler Fleetlines to join the Stevenson fleet, during the period 1979-83, at a time when the company was expanding rapidly, taking on routes further afield. Built to London Transport DM and DMS specifications, bodied by Park Royal and Metro Cammell, these 68-seater double-deckers failed to meet the reliability standards required in the capital, but their early exodus proved a benefit to many provincial operators. The reason for a lower than usual seating capacity, the second exit door, was in most cases removed and replaced by a panel and window sourced from another cannibalised DM. Because of an urgent requirement for vehicles, no 40 retained its second exit door on entering service, together with a simplified livery of black and white stripes to the lower body only. Following a heavy fall of snow in 1985, no. 40 LT no DM1716, makes a steady descent of Knowles Hill, as it approaches Rolleston-on-Dove, a service acquired by Stevenson's in 1981



The 36-footers

At the 1962 Commercial Motor Show, the first to feature the 36 ft long single-decker since the maximum length had been raised from 30 ft to 36 ft, Leyland exhibited the Leopard and AEC the Reliance, both with underfloor engine, while Bedford showed the twin-steer VAL, with its engine mounted at the front end.

It was six years before Stevenson's took delivery of its first '36-footer'. Coach no 4, an AEC Reliance with 51 seat Duple body, met the late 1960s demands for a higher seating capacity. Bus requirements were met in 1975 with the arrival of no 29, an AEC Swift. With its engine at the rear, this layout of high capacity saloon was a trend-setter when first supplied to Wolverhampton in 1967.



Above: With the maximum length of single-deck bus chassis being increased from 30 ft to 36 ft from 1962, the large operators wasted no time in taking advantage. Single-deck vehicles, capable of seating almost as many passengers as a 1950s double-decker, became a regular sight on bus and coach routes throughout the country. The first such vehicle to find its way to Spath was no 4, CTT 423C, in 1968; an AEC Reliance carrying a 51 seat Duple 'Continental' coach body, its design, although badged as Duple Northern, would have been conceived on a Burlingham drawing board. Captured on film at Burton bus park, Coach no 4 keeps company with ex-Portsmouth Atlantean no 27.

Left: No 29, NJW 709E, first took to the road in 1967, a time when rear-engined single-deckers were not the norm that they are today. Originally owned by Wolverhampton Corporation, before it became part of West Midlands PTE, this AEC Swift with 54-seat, two-door body by Strachan, came to Spath in 1975. Stevenson's had no need for the second exit door situated in the centre of the bus, so the opening was filled-in and with two glazing panels of differing proportions making good the area above the waist, the seating capacity was raised to 58. The photograph shows no 29 at Burton bus park, awaiting its departure to Uttoxeter via Hanbury, at a time before a letter 'A' was added to its number, denoting that another vehicle had been allotted the former number.



Above: A 36ft bus type did not join the Stevenson's fleet until 1977. Supplied new to Summerson of West Auckland in 1962, no 18, 6 MPT, a Leyland Leopard with Plaxton body, would have been among the first buses built to the new increased length. Generally the longer vehicles were constructed with the same number of bays as earlier, shorter models, but with longer windows, as in the case of those supplied by Willowbrook and Duple to the BET companies, but with this example, additional bays were added to meet the new length. Another example of this practise is the Midland Red type S16, introduced at a similar time, which incidentally had much of their bodywork produced by Plaxtons. No 18, standing in Station Street, Burton, in front of the business premises of long forgotten proprietors, served as a yellow bus until 1982.

Spath – headquarters:

When the author visited the Spath headquarters in May 1972, the management and staff were in high spirits, anticipating the delivery of their first brand new acquisition for six years. No 21 became the company's first 'grant bus'; LRE 783K, a Ford R192 with Duple Viceroy Express body, was to cover 400,000 miles in ten years.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, Leyland Tigers, nos 22/28 occupied the back row of the parking area awaiting their fate.

When requiring an example of a particular type of bus to illustrate articles or talks, the author has usually been able to find one in the file marked 'Stevo's'. One can only regret that interest in this fleet, rich with variety, did not attract the author's shutter finger earlier than the era covered in this article.



Above right: A visit to the Spath garage in May 1972 revealed no 24, a 1956 Bedford SBG with Duple 41 seat coachwork, of a style featuring the 'butterfly wings' radiator grille, undercover, receiving extensive maintenance to its engine. All vehicles in service were stabled out in the open on an area across the road from the garage. Buses, either awaiting disposal or new-comers yet to be painted would be parked on the back row against the boundary fence. The photograph shows Leyland Tiger, no 28, resting along side her is sister bus, no 22, both with an undecided future. Their owners, having developed a fondness for them were hoping to sell at least one for preservation. To the left is Leyland Titan, no 23 and to the right is AEC Reliance, no 5, UBA 554, a 1961 model with Yeates Fiesta 41 seat coachwork, purchased by Stevenson's in 1962. If the author is ever asked his whereabouts on the night of the Cuba Crisis in 1962, the answer is easy – travelling on no 5, returning from a school visit to a nuclear power station..

Memory Lane



Above: Soon after Stevenson's had taken control of the running of the Burton Corporation services, early in 1986, the author spotted the familiar to him first generation Metrobuses in yellow bus livery. Having been involved with the preparation of technical manuals for these competitors to the long-established Leyland Fleetlines in the late 1970s, he was fascinated to witness the type on his own doorstep. Prototype Metrobus, No 80, TOJ 592S, arrived at Spath in very poor condition in 1989, having been the demonstrator for its builder Metro Cammell Weymann since 1977. The vehicle, although constructed to meet London Transport's specifications, had been operated by a number of other undertakings, in particular West Midlands PTE. It was with some surprise that Stevenson's elected to re-build the bus and remove the second exit door to suit its service requirements. Now owned by Burton-based Midland Classic, no 80 retains her Stevenson's colour scheme, but is rarely seen in revenue-earning service. The photograph shows no 80 on one of those occasions in November 2012. Needless to mention, this beautifully preserved prototype also took part in the 90th anniversary commemoration runs.

WORKSHOPS

SCENE

Mike Forbes has chosen a selection of pictures depicting workshop scenes from the Hodge 'Stilltime' Collection.

It used to be the case, up to around something like 25 years ago, that whenever a transport journalist visited an operator, the visit would include a look at the workshops. These pictures are the proof of that. Most of the series of pictures found in the archive which record such a visit include a shot or two of vehicles under repair.

Even quite small commercial vehicle users would have their own mechanics and workshops, to look after the vehicles they ran. The facilities would range from a simple shed – or even corner of the yard – to quite palatial buildings, with pits or hoists and all sorts of benches and machine tools in some cases.

In some cases, you wonder how the mechanics – notice we don't use the word 'fitter' or technician' here – managed to bring such worn-out lorries back to life in the conditions they had to work in, and I'm not talking about so many years back, either.

In other cases, the workshops looked as if you could 'eat your dinner off the floor', to coin a well-worn phrase. How did they keep them looking so spotless?

The situation has all changed in recent years. The majority of operators send their

vehicles back to the dealers who supplied them for maintenance and repairs. In fact, many of the vehicles are no longer even owned by the operators, so they wouldn't dream of touching them with a spanner and have nobody who could do so.

As the pictures show, in years gone by, many vehicle operators would undertake quite serious repairs to both mechanics and bodywork. Engines, gearboxes, axles and springs would be changed or rebuilt, electrical work carried out, new wings and panels fitted, in fact anything up to a total rebuild of their lorries, which some companies would carry out routinely at a certain age or mileage, to ensure they were fit for further service. This was certainly always true of bus companies and even some high-mileage fleet cars got the treatment.

The pictures here show a cross-section of vehicle workshops of the past. There's plenty of dirt about in many of them – they were rarely clean places to work, but there are lots of details to remind us of the way things used to be. There are lots more pictures like these in the archive, so let me know if you'd like to see more...



Above: Here is a busy scene in the extensive workshops of Hall & Co, supplier of sand, gravel, cement, coal and coke, among other things, probably at its central works at Salfords, near Redhill in Surrey. (We will have memories of being an apprentice there to look forward to in future issues.) We can see four lorries. The early 1930s AEC on the right, fleet no 154 is similar to the one preserved and seen at rallies for many years. Its tipper body has been removed, but it still has its old-fashioned cab in place. There are also three Dennis normal control lorries; VB 5706 (Croydon, 1929), has its body and cab off, fleet no 183 just its body, while fleet no 121 has just had its bonnet removed. We can see seven men working on the benches and one on a chassis. (CHC abl517)

Left: A Scammell trailer bogie takes centre stage here, with three Scammells in the background. We can see how the axles are connected by two springs to a central pivot. There are plenty of those balloon tyres with their distinctive tread pattern ready to be fitted. (CHC abl519)





Left: Staying in the pre-war years and with another major operator, here is a scene in the workshops of J Lyons & Co Ltd. A van in the memorable livery, advertising 'Lyons' Swiss Rolls', based on a Morris-Commercial 'Tonner' by the looks of it, is positioned on a ramp, with the bonnet removed and mechanics working above and below the engine. Similar vans and, surprisingly, a small charabanc can be seen in the background. (CHC aax016)



Above: Another well-known name, Wall's, makers of both sausages and ice cream, the separate fleets meeting here in the workshops. The first four vehicles, at least, are Fords, with two E88W vans with different coachbuilt bodies, for the ice cream and cooked meats fleets at the front, plus a 7V and bonneted 79T. It looks as if the mechanics are preparing to remove the engine from the sausages van. The vices on pedestals in the centre are noteworthy and obviously hefty enough to hold an axle, as seen to the rear. (CHC aax682)



Left: This picture came towards the end of a sequence, the first of which showed the clock at 12 o'clock and the last at 6.30 pm. In between, the two mechanics had removed and replaced the engine in this 'Loadstar' K4 dropside in the Austin Motor Company's own fleet. Here, they are refitting the front panel and wings, after completing the engine change. (CHC aax249)



Above: We are outside the workshops of Aberdeenshire County Council here, with an AEC Mercury dropside tipper, OSA 174 (Aberdeenshire, 1957), being fitted with a substantial snow-plough, ready to clear the roads, along with the larger ex-military vehicle seen to the rear. (CHC aay007)



Left: Yorkshire Egg Producers Ltd, presumably a farming co-operative, with its head office at Drighlington, near Bradford, and multiple branches around the county, according to the signwriting on the van body, ran a fleet of Thames Traders and Austin FEs, like the one seen here. They collected the eggs from farms and delivered them to shops, pretty intensive use for these 'lightweight' lorries, so they would need regular maintenance. The jolly mechanic is wielding a grease gun, hooked up to a Uni-HP drum pump. (CHC aax296)

Below: Here we are in the workshops of Spring Grove, the laundry company, with another engine removal. As in the Wall's workshop, there is a pre-hydraulics chain-operated engine lift in use. The grille panel of the Austin K8, not a 'Three-Way Van' but an open truck of the engineering department, is out of the way in the body, no doubt along with the front bumper. There are two delivery vans, including a Morris-commercial PV alongside. (CHC aay203)



Left: Some heavier stuff now. We are in the workshops of Charringtons, the fuel distributor, with some of its tankers being attended to. It looks as if the mechanics have removed the sump from the TS3 engine of the Commer QX Mk III 'Interim', UXA 378 (London, 1957-8), while their colleague uses a wooden 'hop-up' to reach the windscreen wiper of AEC Mammoth Major Mk III, SGW 112 (London, 1955). This is another spacious well-appointed building.

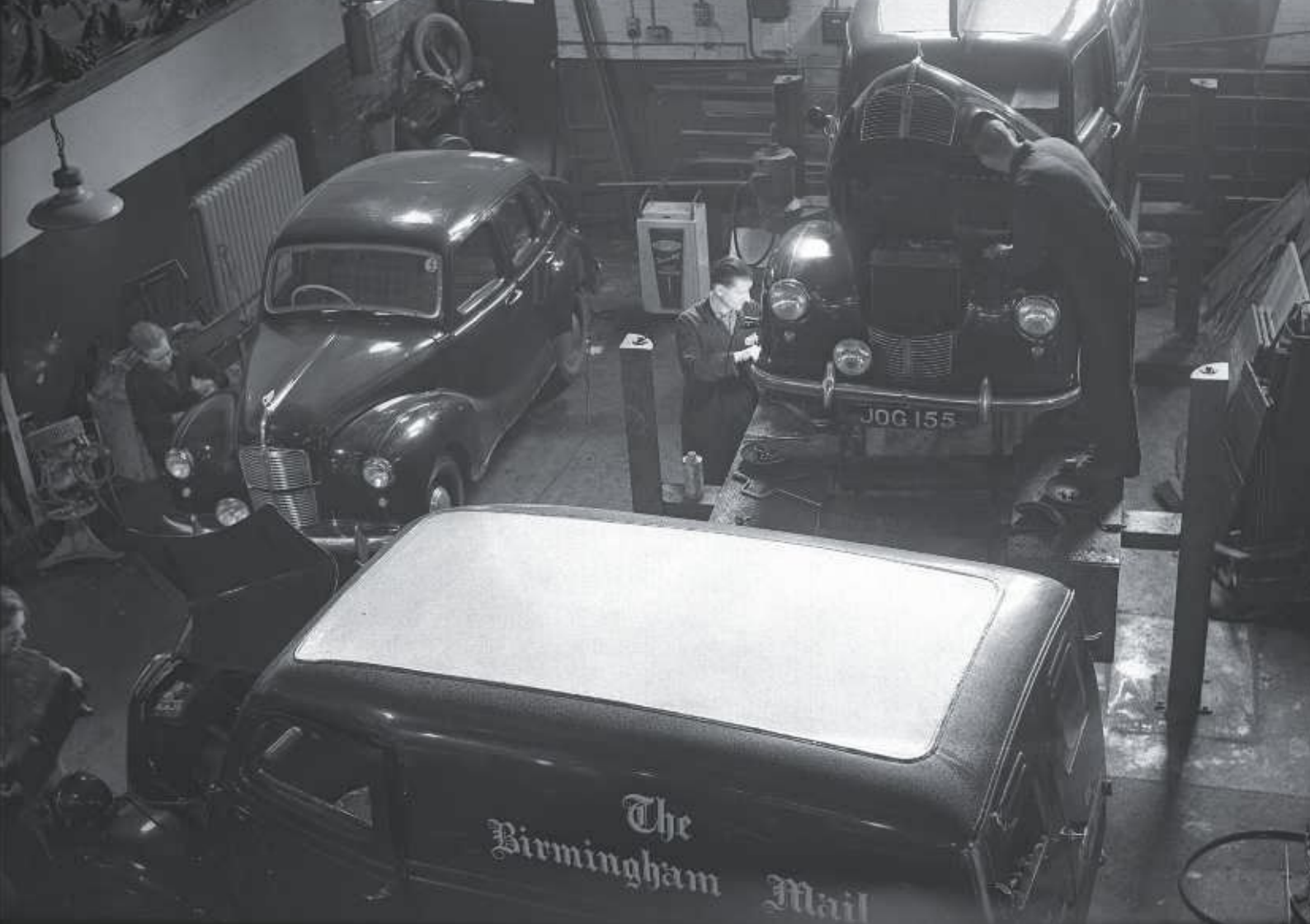
Right: We are back near Croydon here, at London Carriers' main depot in Mitcham this time. We've seen the early Bedford TA Luton van, LOY 596 (Croydon, 1953), before in a Scenes Past concentrating on the marque. It was most likely just being serviced, while the older Bedford M Type, KGN 85 (London, 1949), was undergoing a much more thorough job, with bonnet, radiator and grille, front wheels and hubs, all removed. Surely, it would need to put in a few more years to justify this amount of work. (CHC abc967)



Left: The Crow Carrying Company was obviously well set up to deal with the maintenance of its fleet of Scammell 'motive units', two of which can be seen in this picture – along with a Sunbeam Rapier Convertible, behind the hoist. There are a spare clutch plate, cylinder heads, a complete engine and radiator ready for fitting, as well as a trolley jack and gas-welding bottles ready for use. (CHC abe810)

Below: At the other end of the weight scale, here is an Austin Gipsy, 2277 BY (Croydon, 1960), signwritten for Croydon-based tipper operator, Henry Streeter. It is positioned over a brick-lined pit, so a mechanic can work from underneath. There's a grease gun pump and arc-welding gear on the left. (CHC abe811)





Above: Many light vehicle operators ran their own workshops as well. Here vehicles in the fleet of The Birmingham Mail newspaper are receiving attention. There is a Ford E83W van and an Austin A40 van, JOG 155 (Birmingham, 1949), based on the 'Devon' car, an example of which is also seen here. Mechanics often had to work on several different makes of vehicle. (CHC abb738)



Left: Emphasising the range of vehicle and equipment workshops would deal with, here at Aston Cross, Birmingham Co-operative Society's 1950-registered breakdown truck, KOG 870, based on an ex-military chassis cab, with a smart chariot-style body and Harvey Frost-type crane, has brought in a Parker cement mixer for attention on an interesting single-axle trailer with a tilting bed. The trailer fire pumps on the right carry the breakdown's registration, while a pony trailer, some limousines and a lorry's platform body can also be glimpsed. (CHC abd066)



Right: Another comprehensive rebuild is under way here. An AEC four-wheeled chassis-cab, HYF 656 (London, late 1940s), has its body removed – probably a tanker, judging by the triangular cab rear windows. All the wheels are off, it's propped on stacks of wooden blocks, it looks as if a half-shaft is out too, and it looks as if the cab is being prepared for a repaint. To the right, another mechanic looks as if he's trying to get into the engine compartment under the normal control bonnet of Commer Superpoise, SHT 12 (Bristol, 1954), while there's another bare chassis on the left. The workshops are overlooked by offices, as so often the case (CHC abl529)





Above left: Back to the pre-war years, with what look like a pair of new REO Speedwagon chassis, on London trade plates 073 and 074 XR being given a pre-delivery check. On the left, a couple of older chassis, including CF 8633 (West Suffolk, 1928), are being worked on, with what look like new rear axles being fitted. (CHC abl509) **Above right:** Here's a picture which will take many of us back – 'lapping' or grinding valve seats with paste and a suction-ended stick, to make sure they form a gas-tight seal when shut. Of course, this would be that much bigger a job on a six cylinder lorry engine. Notice all the other valves sitting in the the engine waterways at the rear, ready for their turn of to be re-fitted. He won't need that scarf to keep him warm while doing this job... (CHC abe955)



Left: An outside view at the Perry workshops, with a number of customers' vehicles, notably the new-looking Mowlem tipper, and DMH 50 (Middlesex, 1936), Perry's own 'parts and service' van – the only one with a headlamp cowl, as well as the fancy radiator muff. (CHC abi186)

Below: A very busy workshop scene at Perry, the Ford dealer, with a whole row of pre-war vehicles being worked on. They are mainly Fords, E494C and Y Type vans on the left, a BB canvas-roofed van, a Bedford WT and various others – not a bonnet and few radiators among them – including a couple of the wartime refreshment vans in the background. The white markings on most of the front wings and no headlamp shrouds suggest very early wartime or soon after the war. (CHC abi189)





Above: Strictly speaking, this is a factory view, others in the sequence showing trailer pumps and big Scammell Motive Units, but here we have four 3 ton 'Mechanical Horses', all ready for delivery from Watford, two unregistered for the Southern Railway, CNK 812 for the LMS and FYW 974 LNER, in 1939 (more headlamp cowls and white bumpers). We can also see the rear of a tipping trailer, with a '20' mph speed limit sign, and what looks like an unfinished 6-tonner on the left, but the 'fly-screen' fitted suggests a de-contamination unit, in case of a gas attack. (CHC abb019)



Above: Back to an operator's workshops, with a busy scene, probably around 1960, with a high-sided steel tipper body being built or rebuilt on a Leyland Comet, YTJ 482 (Lancashire, 1956), in the fleet of H Galbraith of Accrington, which looks as if it's put in plenty of work already, on the company's coal haulage contracts. Many operators would take on work of this nature, as well as mechanical repairs, being far more self-sufficient than today's hauliers. (CHC aay720)



Above: Bus companies have always tended to have far more extensive repair facilities, both at local garage level and a 'central works'. Here we 'South Wales' Transport's workshops, complete with smartly tiled pits, over which are positioned an AEC Regent III, its engine and front axle in shiny silver paint, newly reconditioned and fitted by the company, an AEC Regent V, possibly next for a recon front end, and an AEC Regal single-decker, stripped of its front axle and soon to part with its engine, too. They'll go on for plenty more years' service. (CHC aba603)



Left: Many of the larger bus operators used to go the whole hog, removing bodies from chassis, for extensive refurbishment of both, ready for a second or third 'Certificate of Fitness'. Here in Newcastle Corporation's workshops, a Gardner-engined chassis, possibly a Daimler, is being reunited with its body (Metro-Cammell?) with a trolleybus behind. The number 230 appears on the front bulkhead and chassis rail, which will hopefully assist in the vehicle regaining its original fleet and registration numbers on completion. (CHC aaz463)

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Still Working

Deep in Hampshire, a mighty Gardner still roars, and **Allan Bedford** has found out all about it.



Above: The refurbished ERF B Series WDV 860X and new Weightlifter bulk tipping trailer of J H Watson & Son, basking in the early November sun at the company's base, Jervis Court Farm, Swanmore, near Southampton.

Right: The ERF ECX, Y235 TNS, which was replaced by the 'B' series some 18 years older, is now relegated to shunting duties.

It all began on a sunny September afternoon with a sighting of a real 'timewarp', just west of Honiton on the A30 heading east, as I headed west back to Exeter.

Could that brief sighting of a blue ERF 'B' series complete with a modern bulk tipping trailer really mean the lorry was still earning a living?

Just a fortnight later, after a foray to the Mendips area in search of still working British tippers, I caught up with the old wagon, this time heading west on the A303 near Ilchester. This enabled me to make a mental note of the signwriting on the cab to follow up. As always, the internet provided enough information and a quick phone call confirmed that Watson's lorry travelled to Exeter weekly usually on a Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday.

After a few weeks, I arranged to meet Robert Watson, the proprietor, one Wednesday in the Marsh Barton area of Exeter, but we missed each other. After several more frustrating attempts to arrange a photo session on one



of his brief visits, there was only one thing for it, travel to his base near Southampton at his invitation to find out more.

Robert's grandfather, Harry, established the original carrier business in 1903 with a horse and cart. By 1930, now trading as Harry Watson and Son Transport Contractors, an impressive modern fleet consisting of three Foden steam wagons, two small Dennis lorries and an American Dodge confirmed his success, as seen in the picture.

Later, the business passed to Harry's son,

to become J H Watson & Son, gradually diversifying into the specialised field it now covers: quoting directly from the company's website:-

"Farm Services

We aim to provide the farming community and the like with a humane, professional and efficient service for the collection and disposal of farm dead stock, butchers, abattoirs and other animal by-product waste. We are registered and approved by local authorities



Above: A scene at Jervis Court Farm around 1930, a fabulous photo that Robert allowed me to borrow to obtain this copy. Note the adjoining field full of corn stooks. At the rear the magnificent six wheel Foden steamer is a 'K' type, 10/12 tonner, a model introduced to the market in 1928; front left Dennis, OU 1002 (County Council of Southampton, 1929); centre Dennis, TP 9136 (Portsmouth, 1930); right Dodge, OU 2523 (C C of Southampton, 1929). Notice that the drivers and crew are all posing with their charges.

and DEFRA for the collection of fallen stock.

All our drivers are licensed MHS slaughtermen and are fully-trained in the dispatching of livestock, collection and disposal of animals.

While a certain proportion of the waste is dealt with at Jervis Court, regulations dictate a weekly run to Exeter or sometimes elsewhere with the remainder, which is where the 'B' series enters the story.

WDV 860X

Fitted with a Gardner 8LX240, this late example of the ERF B Series was first registered on 9/3/82 and was purchased in 2014. The engine, having covered a very high mileage was refurbished by A G Engines, the Gardner specialists just down the road at Fishers Pond, Eastleigh. Matched with a new British-built 'Weightlifter' trailer, and with Robert in charge, the old wagon took on a new lease of life, and replace a 2000-2001 'Y' registered ERF ECX, which has been retained for shunting, etc. Four small MANs and a DAF are used for collections, which include local farm shops, as well as independent butchers on the Isle of Wight, as well as the rest of the South-west.

Mar, 1929

THE COUNTRY GENTLEMAN

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A farm relief measure bringing profit to all sections—Dodge Brothers Trucks

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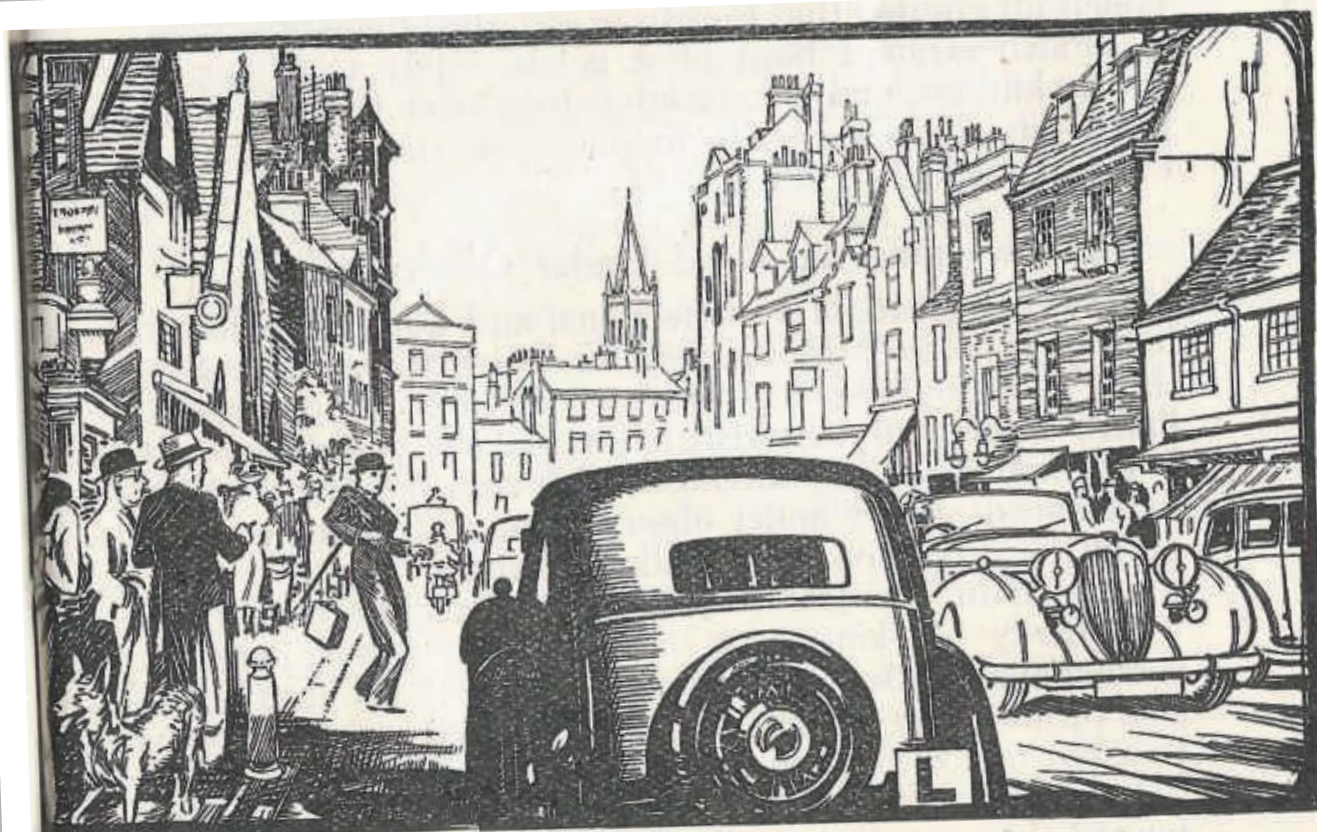
PRICES	
MERCHANTS EXPRESS—120" wheelbase	\$ 529
COMMERCIAL TRUCK—120" wheelbase	773
12000—134" wheelbase	909
12000—140" wheelbase	1007
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14000—140" wheelbase	1411
14000—140" wheelbase	1515
14000—140" wheelbase	1589
14000—140" wheelbase	1709
14000—140" wheelbase	1779
14000—140" wheelbase	1849

Copyright © 1929 Dodge Brothers

Above: An American magazine advert for the 1929 season for the Dodge Bros stake truck. This was the first year that the Dodge name replaced the Graham Brothers marque on lorries available in Britain, with Watsons taking an early example.

THE ART OF DRIVING

As enthusiasts, we are naturally drawn to the makes and models of vehicles seen on our road system in times past. But what about other aspects of the 'vintage roadscene'? The architecture of the actual buildings to be seen beside the road has of course been influenced over the years by wartime damage and an increase in land values in urban areas, but what about the technique of driving itself? How has that changed? **Malcolm Bates** recently discovered a 'How To' book entitled 'Motor Driving Made Easy', which may throw some light on those very questions....



One of the illustrations in the "Autocar" Guide for the "L" Driver]

A sudden blast of the horn may cause real distress to a nervous pedestrian. Ninety-nine times out of a hundred the use of a horn is unnecessary

61

Above: How times have changed! Back in 1946, the errant pedestrian fully deserved a blast from the horn on the basis that footpaths were for people, while roads were for vehicles. We should have been warned that excessive use of the horn would result in a future where roads were infested with speed cameras, traffic humps and traffic flow-restricting chicanes. If only...

It's easy to forget that, even as recently as the early post-war years, there would have been a considerable number of people driving motor vehicles who would have been able to remember a time when the only regular traffic on our nation's highways would have been pulled by a horse or, for something more weighty, a steam engine.

For all its human suffering and the brutal treatment of ordinary soldiers – many who had volunteered, remember – by their own officer class, one of the very few positives that resulted from World War I is that it taught a whole generation how to drive a vehicle powered by an internal combustion engine. From that, using a combination of

fingers and toes, we can deduce that it was just thirty years from the end of World War I until 1948, when Britain finally got itself back into gear after the end of World War II. In other words, less than an ordinary, healthy person's working lifetime.

Why start an article with such fundamental mathematics? Good question. Partly because when we look at period photographs of old vehicles – especially when posed still new outside the premises of a chassis manufacturer, bodybuilder, or dealer – it's easy to forget that, until relatively recently, their very creation depended on the skills of individual workers, rather than some automated, or robotic production process.

Another reason for the maths is to emphasise the point that, even well into the 1950s, the way in which 'driving' was seen and depicted – and dealt with by those with some sort of power over the rest of us – was significantly different to how drivers are treated today. Perhaps even more important – 'worrying' is a word I'd prefer to use – is the way in which drivers of motorised vehicles are depicted today in the media and how drivers are treated by other drivers.

SALUTE - ALL IS WELL

In what way? Well, the present day might be beyond the remit of Vintage Roadscene, but let's first establish how drivers are treated today, so when we journey back in time, we

might be able to establish whether things were once different. Firstly, today in real terms, there are no meaningful pro-active 'Motoring Organisations' to help protect motorists from wrongful prosecution and conviction. There was a time when car and commercial vehicle drivers could rely on free legal representation if they got taken to court. The same organisations once actively campaigned for better roads, fewer petty laws and restrictions – not to mention the restoration of 'The Road Fund', whereby all taxation was in fact spent on road improvements.

Looking at the situation today we can conclude they've comprehensively failed on all counts and have instead, turned themselves into commercial organisations out to sell you a new battery or a windscreen. Back then, the Automobile Association and the Royal Automobile Club were there to help the driver avoid being the target of persecution by the police. An early service was that members were warned by mobile patrols they were approaching police speed traps, by the ingenious 'failure-to-salute' scenario. What a great idea!

There was no suggestion that the organisations concerned were not 'patriotic' – their patrols were volunteered as dispatch riders during both World Wars. But back then, they were there to speed-up road travel and help prevent drivers being nicked as the result of some petty law. Just as no AA or RAC van driver would warn anyone of a speed camera today, that 'esprit' of co-operation and comradeship amongst their fellows is of course entirely lacking in younger drivers



Above: Here's an odd co-incidence. This picture from the Chris Hodge Stilltime archive was clearly taken at the same time as that shot used on the Front Cover of the publication 'Motor Driving Made Easy' - show on the next page. Here we can recognise the scene as the Embankment alongside the River Thames in London. It was taken at a time when the Trams were still running - and when they had their own 'reserved track'. On the cover of the book, the trams were removed. But oddly, the Austin car that appears on the front cover isn't there on the actual picture! was it added in to make the traffic seem more congested? In contrast, the cyclist has vanished!

as well. You want proof that things have got worse? How on earth did we reach a situation where it is 'illegal' to warn drivers against

breaking the law?

Presumably, there has always been plenty of hand-wringing opposition to increasing the speed of road traffic since the very dawn of motorised road transport. The Read Flag Act, the pressure exerted by the Railway Lobby to keep both the speed and payloads of lorries restricted to a laughably low level (in relation to what was technically possible) for long enough for the environmental lobby groups to take over their mantle in more recent years.

But a look back into the archive will show that even the delight in the 1930s motoring media that the last few 20mph speed restrictions (for cars and motor-cycles of course, the blanket 20mph limit for commercials would last much longer) had at last been consigned to history seems to have been a short-lived victory now that the single-issue pressure group 'Twenty is Plenty' has convinced many local councils to turn the clock back 60 years!

CONTRAST IN ATTITUDES

Have you heard any outcry from any 'Motoring Organisations' or vehicle users' groups that such a policy is bonkers? Or



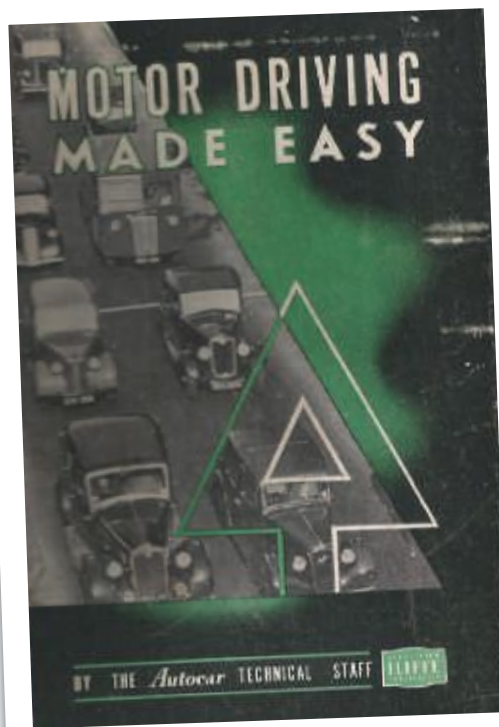
Above: This is a 'reversed' view looking back up the road to the west. We have a traffic policeman's 'box' on the left and a gaggle of decidedly 'war weary' commercial vehicles trundling along in the company of a surprisingly high number of black cabs. Pity we can't see the livery or registration of the Scammell 'Mechanical Horse'.

that mounting suggestions of a lorry ban in central London and other cities might result in a boycott by the road haulage industry, calling on all members of the RHA, the FTA and the tipper operators to dump their loads on the hard shoulder of the M25, so that those calling for the bans can pick up the goods by bicycle or eco-friendly modern day milk floats?

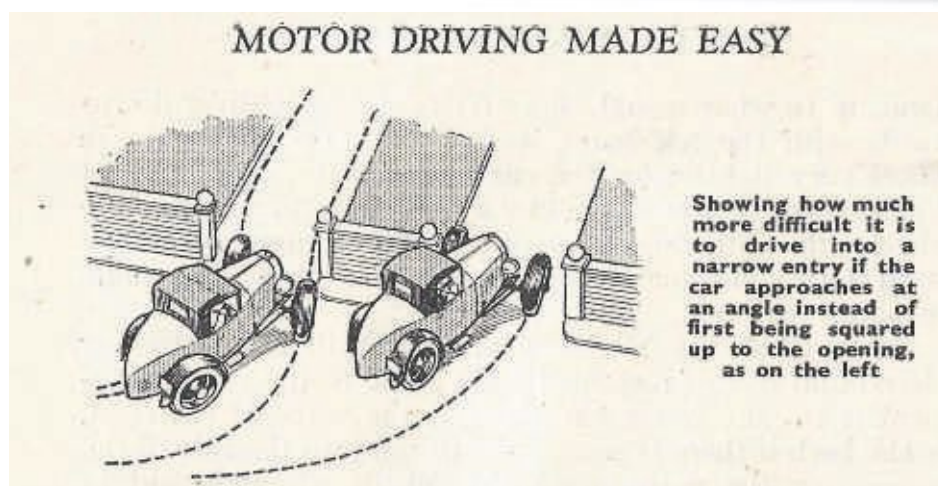
No of course you haven't. Because in the last few decades, all those organisations who take our membership money have failed to balance the upsurge in anti-motoring pressure groups. And to make matters worse, the advent of 'Dash-cams' have even made it fashionable for one group of motorists to 'shop' those from a group they don't approve of.

That's today then. But what about 'yesterday'? The 1946 edition of 'Motor Driving Made Easy' helps to give us a flavour of what life was like as a driver of a car (mostly) or a commercial vehicle, back in the day when 'officialdom' was to be circumnavigated wherever possible, it was okay to smoke a fag (or a pipe if you were middle class) behind the wheel, without impinging some blanket interpretation of an EU directive banning smoking at work, and it was also entirely okay for a lorry driver to pull over at lunchtime for a pint on the way back to the depot.

It was certainly absolutely fine to use an old label from a Guinness bottle as a tax disc if you were an impecunious student driver, without receiving anything worse than a slap on the wrist from the local 'Bobby', rather



Confidence in one's ability at the wheel is the keynote of safe driving. It can be acquired only through study of driving technique and consistent tuition in the first instance, followed by intensive practice on the road



Above: These pictures were clearly taken to show road traffic 'congestion' in the late 1940s and presumably, the effect that trams and/or other forms of public transport had on traffic flow. In those days, the official objective would have been to speed-up motor vehicle traffic flow. Today, it would more likely be to look for ways to slow it down, or restrict it! The location of this shot is not clear. Could it be near Liverpool Street Station? But Trolleybus route 543 terminated at Stamford Hill on the journey out from Shoreditch. The wartime Morris could be engaged on bomb site clearance, while Bedford GLF 911 on the left looks to be engaged on multi-drop parcels deliveries.

than the threat of the impounding and the crushing of your car, as is the case today. If we were looking for no other contrast between being a driver in a period up to, say, 1969, and that of being a driver today, it would be attitude and tolerance to issues such as speeding and not having the current 'road fund' licence paid. Back then? Many still thought (wrongly) that money raised by tax on fuel and from the tax disc went on highway maintenance and construction. Today's bland 'VED' ('Vehicle Excise Duty' treats the money extracted as what it is – a 'ransom' for driving a car or commercial on the road.

Let's look for some more contrasts. The front cover of 'Motor Driving Made Easy' is a good place to start. This issue was the first published after the end of hostilities, yet of all the nine or so vehicles featured on the front cover picture, only one – an austere Morris Commercial 30cwt van – is a post-war product. True, there are a few late 1930s cars – a Wolseley, two Austins and a side-valve Ford Anglia – which are hardly old

and, despite the war years, still seem in good condition, but the Riley Merlin BUL 604 and Austin 'Low-loader' Taxi (still with wartime headlamp mask) would be more typical of the vehicles to be seen in a 1946 'vintage roadscene'. Oddly, there are no 'heavies' in the shot.

Driving – an Art or a Science?

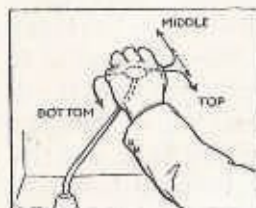
Inside, we get a clearer understanding of what a driver's aspirations would have been back in 1946 – the open road, a pipe and a peaceful life behind the beautifully-crafted dashboard of a Rover 14hp. There's a sliding sunroof and opening windscreen for summer motoring and... Well, there may have even been a 'Smith's' recirculating heater. But that would have been an extra. Perhaps the heat from a decent pipe full of 'Shag' would have assumed a dual role back then?

This publication was first produced in 1919 – underlining the continuous development of motorised transport during those early

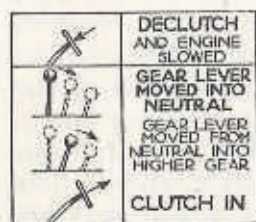
GAINING CONFIDENCE



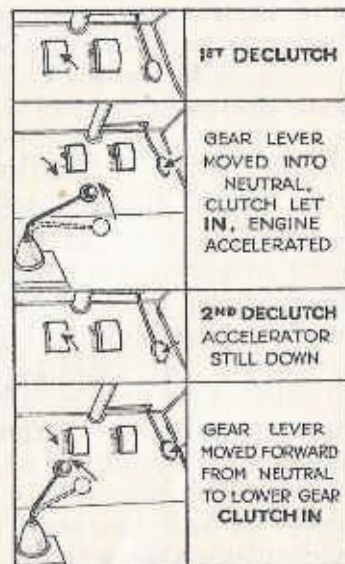
A three-speed car generally has reverse and bottom gears opposite, as here seen



"Across the gate" is here applied to a three speed car, and refers to shifting the lever from bottom to middle (or second) or vice versa



Here is represented diagrammatically the process of changing up, from second (in a three-speed car) or third gear, into top. Note that a slight pause in neutral is implied



The movements of clutch and gear lever, during the process of double-declutching, are here shown in relation to each other. (Accelerator is another name for throttle pedal)

MOTOR DRIVING MADE EASY



THE SIX HAND SIGNALS



No manual signals other than these are officially approved



- Signals to Traffic Behind You
- 1: I am going to SLOW DOWN, or STOP
 - 2: I am going to TURN to my RIGHT
 - 3: I am READY to be OVERTAKEN (the overtaking driver must satisfy himself that he can overtake with safety)
 - 4: I am going to TURN to my LEFT



- Signals to the Traffic Pointsman
- 5: I want to TURN to my LEFT
 - 6: I want to go STRAIGHT AHEAD

years. There are 13 main chapter headings including: 'Learning Control', 'Gaining Confidence', 'Apprenticeship of the Art' (does anyone see driving as an 'Art' today? ... And as for the degradation of the meaning of the word 'Apprenticeship' by both Alan Sugar and successive Government schemes is anything to go by? Don't even go there.

But the really interesting headings: 'The Other Fellow', 'Advanced Driving' and 'The Law and the Motorist' are likely to throw-up the biggest contrasts between 'then' and 'now'. Some things haven't changed much, of course. It's still necessary for a learner driver to be accompanied by a driver who has already passed the test. And it's still the case in Britain that, from the very start, the fledgling driver can venture out on to a public highway, rather than undergo some sort of initial practice run on a closed track.

Top tip back in 1946? Obtain and study the 'Highway Code' before you start to drive, not afterwards! And the one single aspect of driving that needed to be grasped early on? Hand signals. Today, nobody bothers – even cyclists who don't have recourse to any other signalling method. But back then, failure to

Left: Never mind that both cars and commercials featured direction indicators for some while, you knew where you were with hand signals! There are six for the novice to learn here – only taxi and bus drivers were allowed to forget and ignore them! Number 4 and number 6 soon became redundant (the numbers of drawings 4 and 5 were the wrong way round in the book – Ed), as that once essential part of the 'vintage roadscene' – the pointy-hatted Bobby on points duty got replaced by a flat-capped Copper in a police patrol car.

Right: Judged from today's perspective, when we can't even manage to build new aircraft carriers and the planes that will fly from them at the same time, and that for some obscure reason, we have to use French steel when our own hard-hit steel industry is under the control of someone in India (might the two factors be related?), it's hard to believe that Great Britain once really was (a) 'great' and that (b) the rest of civilisation owes us such a huge debt.

Take roundabouts. Wasn't the very first one situated in Letchworth, Hertfordshire? Or was this just the first one in the UK? It doesn't matter. For the purposes of this article, 'roundabouts' were still a 'sexy solution' to traffic gyration at road junctions back in 1946 – and, as such, were worthy of illustration. So even an idiot knew what to do, a sign 'round about' (a word too long to fit onto one line, note!) was required, together with the sound advice to 'Keep Left'.

make a correct hand signal was deemed a serious crime. Even though mechanical indicators had been around for years, they (a) didn't always work and (b) large numbers of vehicles – especially commercials – didn't have them.

We can skip over most of the pages covering the use of the brake, clutch and accelerator pedals – likewise the gear lever, as little has changed in anything other than style and perhaps pressure/input needed. Except for the 'Art' of double de-clutching, perhaps? As any aspiring learner driver of a side-valve Ford (which is likely to have been most of us of a certain age!) or period crash box commercial will tell you, this really did take some learning if 'Kangaroo Petrol'

APPRENTICESHIP TO THE ART



Here are a typical cross-roads roundabout and its road sign



will respond, automatically, to any sudden situation with the least risk of an error of judgment; and that, in all circumstances, you will realise the obligation to consider human life before anything else. It may be mentioned here that the development of this rule is often particularly difficult to apply in the case of animals.

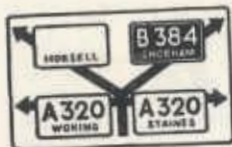
A cat very rarely gives one a hectic moment, unless it



Where a "minor" road enters a "major" there is an obligation to halt, as indicated by the sign on the right. Often one finds the "Slow" sign (extreme right). The road signs are combined with a "signal red" warning circle and triangle



APPRENTICESHIP TO THE ART



As you approach a multiple crossing this form of signpost is often to be seen. Note that the road numbers have predominance



The driver may expect at any moment to see a "Bend" sign warning him that the tree-lined rise conceals a sharp double corner



The traffic roundabout carries these signs; that above, in "signal red", warns you where you may not go. There are several variants of these signs



was to be avoided on a non-synchromesh gearbox. The book tries to break this down to a series of diagrams – it would be interesting to know how successful they would have been in helping!

Significantly, the novice driver is encouraged to 'feel' the gear lever while the qualified driver changes gear – the idea being the force and time taken for the cogs to engage could be detected! There's plenty of advice regarding the hand position on the steering wheel – with right hand at three o'clock and left hand at nine being the favoured position 'at the time' (sorry!). Once we've managed to get our 1946 vehicle up-to-speed, being on a small island, naturally it is going to be essential to learn how to turn around. Getting your vehicle 'squared-up' prior to a turn is deemed to be a topic worthy of a wonderful 'Do' and 'Don't' illustration showing how the idiot driver is likely to clump a rear wing on a gatepost, by 'cutting' the corner.

Amazingly, by page 57, the authors (the technical staff of 'The Autocar' magazine) suggest that: "By now, it is quite possible that the novice will have gained sufficiently in knowledge and confidence to pass the driving test". Blimey! If only things were that simple today, we wouldn't be facing a shortage of British-born commercial vehicle drivers. Indeed, even when I started my HGV training (driving an Ergo-cabbed Albion artie with no power steering (or power!), after a few circuits of a suitably vacant car

Left: Things were a tad trickier at a traditional road junction when a minor road reaches a major road – especially one of those 'orbital' Johnnies. Here, there might be two options: 'Halt' or 'Slow'. Both featured a red triangle and were pretty obvious, surely? The perfect reason for totally renewing all our road signs twenty years later, so as to be in line with 'European practice' then?

APPRENTICESHIP TO THE ART



As you approach a multiple crossing this form of signpost is often to be seen. Note that the road numbers have predominance



The driver may expect at any moment to see a "Bend" sign warning him that the tree-lined rise conceals a sharp double corner

Above left: Ah, this looks like another tricky situation – a multiple road junction. Thank goodness that there's Guardian of the Law – or more likely an AA man in this case – to guide us across (when did you last see a police constable on point duty?). If all else fails, the fact that our driver is wearing a Trilby suggests that his middle-class education and leadership qualities will see him through – even though a flat cap-wearing lorry driver has been spotted on the other side! **Above right:** Ah, the open road! Alas, this is 1940s Britain, so rather than a nice bit of dual carriageway in which we can at last pick up a bit of speed coming out of the village, there's the prospect of a sharp bend, a narrow bridge or some other obstruction that should have been sorted years ago. Here, the sign tells us we have an 'S-Bend' to content with – just the place to encounter an eight-wheeler and draw-bar trailer, then?

park, it was straight out into the traffic, with an artic low-loader trailer, and it was possible to go straight from a car licence to a 'Class One' HGV, without endless 'theory' tests and endless intermediate steps.

Appenticeship for Life

Our little guide issues a warning here: "Driving," we're told, "is a continuous learning experience throughout one's lifetime." Very true. In the Chapter on 'Apprenticeship of the Art' we're given a 'real life' incident to ponder.

We (the reader) are driving at 30 mph and about to overtake a bus (at a bus stop), when we spot a child running out from behind the front of the bus. We're almost halfway down the side of the bus by now travelling, we're informed, at 14 yards per second. Another car is approaching – also we assume at 30 mph – giving us a potential impact speed of 60 mph, if we swerve out to our right in order to miss the child.

Should we hit the approaching car head-on, then? In the era of drum brakes (or even

worse, cable-operated drum brakes) and before seat belts, a head-on crash would have been very serious, while it goes without saying that hitting the young pedestrian would have probably been fatal. What are we advised? 'Think fast,' we're advised. If there's no room for the approaching car to swerve and give you more room, crank the wheel far over to the left and smash down the side of the bus to reduce your speed! Not the most obvious suggestion, today, I'm thinking? Interestingly, we're warned not to rely on the



Above: A post-war Bedford – note the driver poised to do another hand signal – and austere Morris Commercial 35cwt van operated by 'Beardsalls of Retford' pull into the traffic 'gyratory' from the left while a lone cyclist, wearing a flat cap for protection, picks his path between other commercial traffic. We'd love to know the prices of the 'appliances' for sale in Currys at the time!

use of the car horn, in case it causes panic! Really? Panic has to be better than impact surely?

Conclusion – A Sign of the Times?

That's it! One of the key differences between the 'vintage roadscene' and that of today is the use of signage – both in terms of style and quantity. The road signs in use from the start tended to back up the use of a suitable symbol with a short obvious statement like: 'Low Bridge' or 'Road Narrows'. The far greater number of level crossings that existed before a certain 'Doctor Beeching' was appointed to change the railway map of Britain, suggests that it might have been quite important to spot the difference between a 'Level Crossing' and a 'Crossing - No Gates', but the symbols for a 'Hospital' and a 'School' were less obvious.

Perhaps the greatest contrast between 'then' and now? How about the variety of 'vehicles' using the same stretch of road? In rural areas, it might still be common to encounter a steam traction engine or horse-drawn farm cart, as well as the local bus on the way to the nearest market town, postmen or farm workers going to work – as well as the local doctor in his 14hp Rover and the milkman or coalman on his rounds. But in urban areas, it got even more complicated, with a mad rush by all concerned to get somewhere else.

This situation is clearly – although perhaps unintentionally – captured in this series of illustrations from 'Motor Driving Made Easy'. We don't actually see any horse-drawn brewer's

"THE OTHER FELLOW"

road ahead, without relying upon the leader being as acute as oneself.

It is not wise to drive so close on the man in front that he may, in making an emergency stop, render it impossible for you to pull up without ramming him.

When about to pass another car, if you feel any doubt, touch your horn to give warning of approach. Put your hand out to indicate to those behind your intention of pulling over, and observe a reasonable medium in going past, so that you neither yaw right across the road in an exaggerated sweep nor cut it so fine as to graze his running board. Your duty, having passed, is to return as speedily as possible to your own side of the road; but do not, in your anxiety to achieve this, clip across the front of the passed car so close as to cause damage or inconvenience.

Passing downhill is not generally advisable, unless obviously safe, since it is far more difficult to pull up if needs demand it. In passing uphill it is at all times a sensible preliminary to drop into a lower gear.

Assuming that you yourself are thoroughly competent, you need two main essentials to comfort and ease of mind – first-class

THREE THINGS YOU DISLIKE



The man who hangs close on your tail



"Smart Alec" who cut close in on your bows

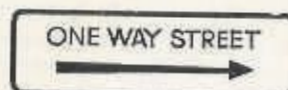
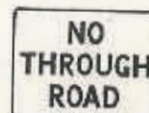


The man who drives too far out

APPRENTICESHIP TO THE ART



Sixteen further road signs. Those above need no comment; those immediately below refer to points at which extra care for pedestrians must be taken



A capital "P" on a blue ground indicates a parking place. The time limit in such is generally two hours, sometimes less



On the left is a reflector sign giving warning of some permanent obstruction. At the centre is a form of sign in which the road number takes precedence. Right, a "unilateral" parking sign intended to avoid habitual congestion

drays, coal wagons, or railways parcels delivery vans, but all would have been a regular part of the vintage roadscene until the early 1960s – even in London, Liverpool and other major cities. But we do get a sense of how hard it must have been to steer a course between cyclists, buses, lorries and coaches, as well as that 'vehicle' we seldom see today, the motor-cycle and side-car combination. As if that wasn't enough to contend with, we have 'The Smart Alec' driving a rorty little sports car.

The 'Tailgaters', the 'Smart Alecs' and those who drive way out in the fast lane (thus holding-up the 'Smart Alecs' amongst us) illustrated here are still with us, of course – except these days, rather than waste six feet of 1930s 'Orbital' road, they disregard the first two (empty) nearside lanes of the recently-widened-at-great-expense M25 and hold-up all of us!

EDITOR'S NOTE

As usual, our Malcolm has found something to 'Take-a-Pop-At', but he makes some valid points. Is it true that we only tend to notice the actual vehicles, rather than the full context of their operation and the social conventions that applied at the time? What are your memories of either the 'roadscene' back in the days when professional drivers warned each other of the presence of a police speed trap, or inspection of drivers' log books by 'The Men From the Ministry'? Were drivers more 'loyal' then? More 'free'? And was that a good thing, or not? We would love to hear your opinions – and your stories – on this subject.

We are still working our way through the reports from our regular contributors on rallies in the latter part of the 2016 season. There were many interesting and nicely-restored vehicles to be seen at the many events around the country.

These pictures remind us of what we saw – or maybe missed – last year, and what we can look forward to in 2017.

Shrewsbury

Malcolm Ranieri and **Barry Fenn** visited the Shrewsbury Steam Rally at Onslow Park during the August Bank holiday weekend. Among the many interesting commercial vehicles on show, a number of Leylands, Albions and Dodges with the 'LAD' cab stood out.



1: The usual sight of two Crossley SD42 half-cab coaches – there were two Fodens as well – Plaxton-bodied FAW 334 always owned by Albert Davies of Acton Burnell, Shropshire, and Burlingham-bodied FJU 818, believed to be owned by Simon Emerton of Nantwich, Cheshire.

2: J Leech of Haslington, Crewe, Cheshire, has a large fleet of preserved lorries, including this Leyland Comet, fitted with a livestock body.

3: This six-wheeled tipper, photographed by Malcolm Ranieri entering the rally field is just one of the fleet of preserved Dodges regularly seen at rallies in the livery of Lea Brothers of Edgmond, Newport, Shropshire.

4: A BMC-badged FG 30 cwt platform lorry with single rear wheels. The 'angle cab' or 'thrupenny bit' is becoming popular in preservation circles.

5: 'Little Giant', a Foden STG5 timber tractor, restored after fairground use.

6: The Dodge and Leyland of J Leech, another Leyland Comet in Harvey of Hurstpierpoint livery, a Leyland Super Comet 20 six-wheeled tipper and BRS-liveried Octopus in a Barry Fenn line-up.

7: Another of Barry's line-ups of LAD-cabbed lorries, Albion Clydesdale and Reiver four and six-wheelers, with three different Dodge 300 Series.

Retro Show

The Retro Show, held at the British Motor Museum at Gaydon in September, gives owners a change to show off their more recent preserved vehicles, along with some still in use. **Len Jefferies** and **Chris Andrews** went along for us.



- 1: Three Scania in WH Malcolm livery, an LB76 from 1967-8, flanked by a '111' from 1978 and a nearly new 'R' Series.
- 2: An attractive Rolls-Royce powered ERF B Series among the vehicles shown by 'REVS' members.
- 3: In Geoff Gilbert livery, this Volvo F88 from 1978, with left hand drive and a 'tilt' trailer with 'TIR' markings, shows what a typical international haulage vehicle would have looked like in its day.
- 4: Bernie Bailey's late model Commer QX from the Tate & Lyle fleet, with low-loader trailer, was seen among the more modern lorries.
- 5: This Kenworth 'cab-over' was among several American vehicles seen at the show.
- 6: Over from Belgium for the show was this Scania 143M 'Streamline'.
- 7: Mercedes-Benz vehicles are becoming more popular in preservation, like this 1632 tractor unit from 1976, over from Ireland.

Otley

The Otley Vintage Transport Extravaganza was held on Sunday, 11th September. Keith Baldwin got his passport stamped at the Yorkshire border and reports back. He says it was strange to see sunshine at a Northern rally in 2016, there was a good selection of vehicles and it was a good day out.



- 1: A nice example of a 1949 Bradford 'lorry', as the Jowett-built dropside was known.
- 2: This 1926 Albion tipper in the livery of Kerr of Wakefield was in superb condition in Keith's opinion.
- 3: Two for the price of one, with timber merchant, Arthur Green's 1950 Leyland Beaver and 1981 Scania 111.
- 4: This 1979 Seddon Atkinson 200, with a later-style grille, in the livery of Glenn Barker, was previously shown by Colin Pitt.
- 5: A Bedford 'K' Type dropside, nicely restored in the livery of John Dykes of Haworth.

Porthcawl

Neil Taylor sent us some pictures from the second annual Porthcawl Truck Gathering, held over the first weekend in September. There was quite a range of vehicles to be seen, including plenty of classic lorries.



Above: This AEC Mammoth Major six-wheeler probably started out as an RAF refueller, but looks good with a sheeted load on its platform body, in the livery of Mike Harris of Bridgend.

Above: Looking equally good in the livery of greengrocer, Teesdale of Maesteg, was this Leyland Lynx, first registered in London in 1940.

Kettering

Kettering Vintage Rally & Steam Fayre, held at the end of September, usually hosts a large number of interesting commercials. The 2016 event was no exception, as Barry Fenn and Len Jefferies found out.



1: First time out for this newly-restored Thames Trader tractor unit, added to the growing preserved fleet of P C Howard of King's Cliffe, near Peterborough. **2:** A well-finished 1952 example of the Morris PV van, originally a Civil Defence vehicle, now with Vallance of Mansfield, next to the Mercedes-Benz 813, which would have brought it to the Cranford rally site by the A14. **3:** Another nicely-finished 1950s van, a Bedford CA, also on show at the Kettering rally. **4:** This 1929 Chevrolet, with a crane fitted in its dropside body, was brought to Kettering by Dave Glynn of Denaby Main. **5:** Two for the price of one again, with ERF A Series artic, carrying the ex-Billy Smart's Foden STG crane truck. **6&7:** A well-presented Bedford OWLD dropside, ACT 873, which has been around for a while, and a 'work in progress', YVG 187, another example of this popular lorry.

Bishop's Castle

The Bishop's Castle Michaelmas Fair was held in the Shropshire town at the end of September and Malcolm Ranieri photographed some preserved commercial vehicles on show.



- 1: A smart Cummins-powered Atkinson Borderer tractor unit seen at Evans wood yard in Bishop's Castle.
- 2: This pre-war Foden DG4, along with an FG ballast tractor and Volvo N Series, was in the livery of local operator, A Evans.
- 3: This 1921 Sentinel 'Standard' steam waggon was also there.
- 4: An ERF EC which had brought a showman's ride to the fair.

Quainton

A steam rally was held at Quainton Road Station of the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre the same weekend, with a number of preserved commercials attending.



Above: Posing on the weighbridge in the station goods yard was this Austin 301 version of the Morris LC 30 cwt lorry.



Above: This Fordson E83W dropside pick-up has not been over-restored and really looks the part in the railway goods yard.

Above: Fully finished in its original wartime NFS (National fire Service) livery and markings, including hooded lights, was this Austin K2 ATV (Auxiliary Towing Vehicle).

WHITWOOD 2016

This is the last event of the year for HCVS Yorkshire Region and by far the best attended that Roy Dodsworth says he has known. As usual, thanks to the organisers and parking stewards, together with fine and dry weather, an enjoyable day was had by all. Among the regular attenders were a number of vehicles that Roy has not seen before.



1: A 1918 model Ford Model T, XL 453, left hand drive, model MTF1. First registered in 1925 and named Border Veteran, this was second-hand to Stan Robson, who established the business in 1925, and thought to be the first or second vehicle he bought. The second owner is David Campsey, who was given the vehicle 40 years ago by Mr Robson. You might think a generous gesture, but Mr Campsey married the boss's daughter! This was its first trip out for 20 years. **2:** A 1955 Thames 4D flat wagon with a London registration, RYL 573, painted cream and red. Unfortunately I was unable to track down the owner, but the headboard suggests the vehicle might be ex-Coca-Cola, although the registration suggests ex-Civil Defence? **3:** A 1951 Bedford O Type wagon, AFL 328, a registration number issued by the Sock of Peterborough, fitted with a 28 HP petrol engine, in the livery of Ken Longthorne of Hebden. This was fitted with an extended body by first owner, timber merchants, Trowells of Boston. The vehicle is now owned by Brian Lockwood, who bought the vehicle six months ago, after it had been in store at Longthorne's for 40 years. He has undertaken to keep the Longthorne livery for some time. **4:** A 1954 Trojan recovery vehicle, RRO 240, fitted with a Perkins diesel engine. Driven by owner, Brian Glynn, it was first registered in Hertfordshire as a milk float. **5:** A 1957 Commer C type artic unit, 886 UYP. Fitted with a two-stroke diesel engine, it has been restored over the past three years by Graham Reed of Swinefleet, and out this year, alongside the owner's AEC Mercury. **6:** This AEC Mercury of Richard Gillam was previously in the fleet of R C Jefferies, and can be seen with a livestock body in Bill Reid's AEC book. **7:** An increasing number of the later 'G'-cabbed Leylands is appearing on the preservation scene now, like this Boxer tipper.

LIFE ON THE ROAD – PART 9

Following on from my previous article last month, I mentioned that I had agreed to do the Isle of Man run for Geest Shipping Company.

We set sail from the port of Heysham around 9 pm, for the overnight crossing to Douglas and, after a fine three-course meal, I joined a dozen or so other drivers in the bar. It was then that I discovered I'd left my wallet in my cab. On entering the hold, where all the trucks and trailers were chained down for the crossing, I was faced with a sight that I never ever wish to witness again. The boat had let in water and it was almost axle deep. Not wanting to sponge off other drivers, I had no option but to whip off my pants and wade knee deep through the water to my cab in order to get my wallet. I now needed that drink more than ever!

On retiring later that evening, it was comforting to find a life jacket had been placed in every cabin. I don't remember much about that night or early hours, other than hearing the water pumps working at full force. The best bit about that trip was smelling the aroma of bacon coming from the restaurant, shortly before we reached Douglas.

Once ashore, I had to wait an hour for my escort to take me up to Ramsey. This consisted of two Lada cars and two motorcycle out-riders, the reason being I was pulling a 40 ft trailer and container and only 20 ft trailers were officially allowed on the Island. I must say that the return overnight crossing was far more relaxing, as most of the trucks and vans returning to the mainland were empty, allowing the boat to sit higher in the water. Yes! I did return to the I O M more than once, but lesson learned, I never left my wallet in the cab again.

The years passed by on the Geest contract, which usually involved five nights away from home every week, with brand new motors, Scania and Volvos, still continuing to arrive at the depot.

Running home to the base in Hull early one Saturday morning, I received a phone call from my traffic manager Fred, telling me he would wait back for me as he needed to tell me something. 'Tell me now' I shouted at Fred down the phone, thinking something had happened to my wife or family. He told me to calm down, as it was to do with work. He then told me that Glynn Davies had sold out, lock, stock, and barrel, to 'Securicor Omega'. When I asked when this had happened he said: 'Yesterday' and they take over immediately, but we would continue on as normal for the foreseeable future on the Geest contract.

In fact, Fred was right, for we did carry on as normal for a further six years. The only big change was the colour of the motors and our uniforms. Gone were the striking black and yellow Russell Davies colours and the unmissable white with red and blue striped cabs of the Geest contract, and in came plain blue with contrasting white lettering. A further change was Securicor's preference for Scania and Renault, and within one month the first Renault Premiums arrived, followed by six Scania's, one of which I was offered.

This change, of course, was taking place at every depot across the UK, at a speed never before seen, apart from the nationalisation of BRS (British Road Services) many decades earlier. This was another company I drove for and sadly got the sack from in the 1970s. I may include that story in my book – if I ever write it, that is...

I have lost track of dates and my diaries over my years of retirement, and can only hazard a guess at around the early 'noughties', when another shock took place, with the announcement that Securicor had lost the Geest contract to a small haulier from Suffolk, which happened to have a very close connection with... wait for it... 'Russell Davies', later becoming 'Hanbury Davies'. Remember this company? Dark Maroon MAN and Renault motors, etc. It is right what they say. Life does go round in a circle.

In Hull, Securicor had increased the fleet back to the original 20-25 trucks and drivers but, as we had no other work, an emergency meeting was called. It was put to us by the top management that they wished to keep eight Hull-based drivers, with preference going to the longest serving members, with the rest to be paid off. Was this to avoid a massive pay-out to the eight of us? Or, on reflection, were we to be grateful to be kept in work with such a good company?

By now, Securicor had introduced some great incentives. For example, a fifth weeks holiday on full pay, based on a 60 hour week, to be taken at Christmas. Full pay given to all drivers to sit the annual 'Dangerous Goods Licence' Hazchem training. This took a week to complete, but was essential to cover the wide range of dangerous goods carried in containers. Sadly, a request by four of us Generation 2 drivers to be upgraded to Generation 1 was turned down. We tried, but you can't win 'em all!

We accepted their offer and were split into three groups. Three ran out of Felixstowe, three from the Isle of Grain (Thamesport) and two out of Southampton, the latter being my choice. I was given a brand new Renault 'Premium', my first one, and put on

the massive APL contract, of which 80% of the cargo carried was loose handball from Singapore and the USA. Many of my delivery drops were three hours long, which gave me ample time to sit in my cab, writing articles for several classic car clubs of which my wife and I were members at the time.

I saw very little of Southampton as a town or even the depot, as most nights I was away as far as Kent or Blackpool, but I did enjoy the opportunity of visiting the annual Boat Show held there, walking around the billion pound yachts and seeing how the other half live.

Fridays seemed to come very quickly, and like clockwork. I always seemed to have a box (container) on my back for the North; usually Yorkshire or the North East.

As APL did not collect export re-loads on a Friday, it was back to Hull, park the wagon up, fill out all the paperwork, timesheets, tachographs and clerical stuff, hand them all in, then home. This could be as early as midday, though there were many occasions when it could run into a Saturday finish.

I continued running out of Southampton for four years, until we received a further shock announcement. Securicor Omega was to be taken over by DHL, Worldwide Deutsche Bank. Once again we eight drivers remained loyal to DHL, as they did to us, and we were highly praised for bringing the Northern loads home every Friday, thus avoiding drivers from the South being stuck 'Up North'.

DHL's choice of motors were MAN, Mercedes and Volvo. I remember climbing aboard my first ever Mercedes, a top-of-the-range 'Actros'. What a machine! It was the only motor ever to equal my Ford Transcontinental, that I used to drive at 'Browns' in the 1980s, for space, power and driver comfort. For the next two years I had to run out of Immingham, hauling ferry trailers, tilts or whatever you called the damn things. Heavy sideboards, sliding roofs and stuffed full of rubbish, from black oxide, explosives, acid, wine, potatoes and everything in between. What a shock to the system.

However, I stuck with it until 2005, when the remaining eight drivers, including me, were hauled back down to Felixstowe to hear some news (again!) and to decide our futures. We were all to join the same 'new' contract and become a total fleet of some 50 trucks and drivers. The bulk of the drivers all lived around Nottingham and we were to run out of a little place called East Leake.

The contract will be revealed next time, though, no doubt, many readers of this brilliant magazine will have the answer already.

Brian Featherstone, Hull

MYSTERY CHARABANC

It seems the charabanc which Colin Read of Croydon asked us to identify is not such a mystery after all.

Roy Dodsworth writes:-

I have identified the mystery charabanc as follows. It was a 1907 German-built Durkopp charabanc, supplied new to North Eastern Railways, which had at least two – BT 175 and BT 202. With a four cylinder 24 hp engine, it would be able to carry 32 passengers and a quarter ton of luggage. It was imported by Motor Car Emporium, Holland Park Avenue, London.

Attached is a photograph found on internet – I have no information on who took it – which shows a further vehicle, BT375. I wonder where the ladder was kept? The undertakers seen in the background, T Marshall and Sons, is still in business, at Pickering in North Yorkshire.

The North Eastern Railway was based at York, so the East Riding registration would not be unusual. Also attached is an advert from the main dealer!

Allan Bedford writes:-

This is a German 24hp Durkopp with bodywork built in the North Eastern Railway

Durkopp Charabanc, c1907



Company's Carriage and Wagon Works in York, which entered service in 1905. It was one of three tiered charas built by the railway company on the German chassis that year, which were allocated to Bridlington on 1st August 1905, with the main tourist destination being Flamborough.

The company eventually built up a fleet of around 16 PSVs and three 15 hp parcel vans of this make. Other users included the London Road Car Company (aka 'Union Jack') with 24 examples, and a lone example with the Hastings & St Leonards Omnibus Co Ltd. The GWR tried a few, but experienced broken crankshafts, while the North Eastern found frame weakness and fierce clutches a constant problem. Sales here were through the Motor Car Emporium Ltd, Addison Road, Holland Park, London.

Those of our generation will recall the Durkopp name on the popular 'Diana' motor scooter. The current activities of this industrial giant (Durkopp Adler)

can be viewed on the internet, with a manufacturing base still given as the town of Bielefeld over a century on from these pioneer vehicles. (Sources include 'Railway Motor Buses & Bus Services in the British Isles (Vol 1) John Cummings, Oxford Publications 1978; Road Vehicles of the GWR, Phillip J Kelley, by the same publisher 1973; Motor Buses in London 1904-8, R W Kidner, Oakwood Press 1975; 'The Hastings Omnibus, 1832-1914', David Padgham, Hastings Local History Group, 2015.

Mike Sutcliffe, Editor - Leyland Society magazines, etc, writes:-

On page 68 of the January issue, you asked for the identity of a charabanc registered BT 175. This was one of a number of Durkopps operated by the North Eastern Railway, probably no 9 in the fleet, new on 15th June 1906. The tiered charabanc body looks well-laden and putting an immense strain on the hind wheel bearing – which looks to be well worn!

STAND-UP MAN

In the caption to picture abh119 in the Roadworks article you refer to the 'gaffer. In the 1960s, he would more probably be called the 'stand-up man' because that's all he did.

Mick Gannon,
via e-mail



SEDDONS, GUYS AND GODDESSES

Issue 205 of *Vintage Roadscene* was excellent. At first glance, the Lin-Can Seddon on page 41, with its Boalloy cab, looks like an ERF. I wonder how many Seddons were fitted with Boalloy cabs. The Senior Service Bedford TK box van on page 42 reminds me of a cigarette carrier named 'Bondelivery' in the 1960s. The company used plain green Bedford TK box vans to keep a low profile.

I believe Bondelivery stood for Bonded Delivery, something to do with Customs Revenue. The letter from Robin Hannay reminded me of Guy Motors. Some time ago, I read an article about Guy Motors, saying the company was established in

Wolverhampton in 1914. The first vehicles made were 15 cwt lorries, fitted with White & Poppe engines. In 1915, Guy was taken under the control of the Ministry of Munitions. Guy made hundreds of Tylor JB4 petrol engines and hundreds of Maudslay four-speed constant mesh gearboxes for the British Army. The article didn't say for which vehicles the engines and gearboxes were made.

More recently, I have seen some information about the Green Goddess fire engines. They were built for the AFS in case of nuclear war, between 1953 and 1956. A total of 1,300 were built on Bedford S-type chassis, while 1,900 were built on Bedford RL chassis. A further 400 Bedford RL chassis scuttles were taken into store as

spares. The 400 RLs were never required, and were not sent to coachbuilders. They were eventually sold off unused as chassis scuttles. The Green Goddess pumps were capable of reaching 50 mph.

In 1957, a further 50 Red Goddess fire engines were built for the Army Fire Service. These machines had longer ladders than the Green Goddess appliances and were capable of reaching 70 mph – maybe with a five-speed gearbox. The Red Goddess vehicles were kept at ordnance depots. A few more coachbuilders that built the Green Goddess fire engines were Longwell Green, Strachans, Jennings, Plaxton, Wtllowbrook, and Papworth Industries.

H Daulby, Croydon

RECOVERY VEHICLE

In the 'Road Haulage Archive' issue 'A Life with Lorries', I noticed on page 79 the Volvo recovery of Winters from Medway. Attached are two photos I took at the

company's depot on the Isle of Grain, back in the 1980s, which I hope you can use in the correspondence pages of the magazine.

Les Freathy, via e-mail



AN FX4 STILL WORKING

I was walking across Blackfriars Bridge in London, on Saturday evening, 26th November and, to my surprise, a 1995-96 FX4 taxi, N472 PUL, passed me, still in active service. I thought these had all gone – indeed many of the replacement TX4 type have already disappeared. It joined a queue waiting for traffic lights and I was able to catch up with it and take a couple of photos. I thought you might like to see them. The picture shows it with a contemporary TX4 drawn up behind.

As always, *Vintage Roadscene* is a good read and I look forward to it each month. Compliments of the season to you.

John Raggett, Meopham, Kent.



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HCMC345

Thank you for publishing the Road Haulage Archive issue on 'Heavy Haulage', which is taking me ages to read. The whole scenario takes me back fifty years or so. For seventeen years, I was a 'Black Rat' with the Metropolitan (until 1965) then Kent Police.

I assisted in escorting many loads during that period, riding Triumph 500 cc motorcycles, as seen in the top photograph on page 80. The format usually involved three solos. The leader was positioned way ahead of the convoy, sometimes dismounting at major junctions, as in the centre right picture on page 44. The second solo was just ahead of the first hauling unit. The third, at the rear of the convoy, supervised overtaking traffic. Because of the slowness of the convoy, the lads would swap positions, to allow the solos to cool down.

Operators and manufacturers would notify B2 of the movement days beforehand. The department would compile a route, avoiding bridges, over or under, and other snags. Local authorities would attend to street furniture,

▼ A press cutting about a load which he had a hand in getting stuck, at the junction of the South Circular with Roehampton Lane at Barnes Common.

etc. B2 would send the route by teleprinter or phone to the operators, the local authorities and the police escort garage, to notify time and date of the move.

Until 1964-5, there were no movements before 20.00 hrs and loads would be laid- up. Sundays were excepted, but an 8 am start was needed. This was all before the M 25, motorways generally, marker boards and amber warning lights existed. I enclose a copy of a route I had a hand in.

There was a restriction on using the 'Neasden Iron Bridge' on the A406 North Circular, which resulted in a lengthy diversion northwards, all around the Wembley area, before returning to the A406. Which reminds me, the Ace Café was a refreshment stop for the crews and escort. Where they ate, we ate, all on the contractor's slate.

A series of movements, three I think, involved heavy transformers from GEC at Park Royal, to a new power station at Beddington, were Sunday morning jobs. This used three heavy haulage vehicles, two at the head, with the third at the rear.

It was snowing during the move in which I was involved. As a result, all traction was

▲ The B2 route discussed by George.

lost at the head, on a hilly part of the route. The lead tug was detached and made its way, via the A 214 and the A 23, to come up behind the convoy and push – successfully. During this manoeuvre, some ladies from nearby flats supplied us with hot drinks. Such fun.

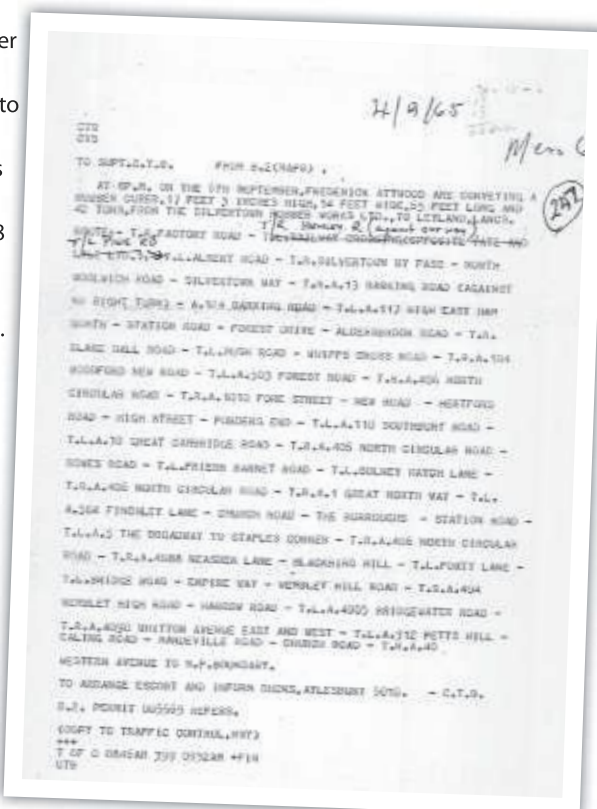
Other solo escorts were of RAF ambulances, with children from BAOR in Germany, from RAF Northolt to Great Ormond Street Hospital – in a hurry! 'Hell Drivers' wasn't in it! Wrong way through one way streets around Bloomsbury and so on...

Other hairy rides went to Atkinson Morley neurological hospital at Wimbledon, from the boundary (of the Metropolitan Police area), with a private ambulance.

All the foregoing was pre-1965.

As an aside, in 'Heavy Haulage', the lower photo on page 39 of Pickfords JXH 282 was taken, post lifting of the tram tracks, about 1953-ish, in Brixton Road SW9 on the A23. The road seen above the cab of the Scammell, with the 'Capstan' advert on the corner is Brighton Terrace. Above the Vauxhall car was Morleys department store. At the time, I lived a mile or so from the scene.

As another aside, I have taken Vintage Roadscene from issue No 1 to date, and cannot find any reference to J Lyons & Co vehicles or when these caterers ceased to exist. (Any offers from our contributors...? – Ed)
Thank you for a terrific trip down Memory Lane.



▲ A splendid Thornycroft van of Bentalls, the department store in Kingston upon Thames.

IRISH INTERLUDE

I enjoyed the section on buses in Dublin in issue 204 (and the one on Irish lorries in the earlier issue), as I have driven coach holiday tours in the Emerald Isle. I always found them to be a pleasant experience, except for the long but interesting walk along the north bank of the River Liffey from the city centre to the coach park in the port area, when based in Dublin.

I was particularly struck by the full-fronted River Class coaches and had no idea there was a river named Fergus (page 22). Did this watercourse happen to flow into the Belfast Lough at Carrickfergus? I am much better acquainted with the Avoca (shown on the front cover), as this waterway flows through a vale and past a village which both bear the name of the river, and the whole area to the south of Dublin.

Some may have seen the village without realising that it was the setting for the TV soap 'Ballykissangel', the reason for coach tours calling there. It would be interesting to see a complete list of the names of the River Class coaches, and then to consult a map to see where these waterways flow, if the full course can be traced.

When I first started touring in Eire, distances were shown in metric and speed limits in English numerals (or it might have been the other way round!) Whichever way it was, it was all somewhat confusing but, by the time I had retired, everything had gone metric. The Republic drives on the same side of the road as the rest of the British Isles but, should the country ever decide to 'go continental' in that respect, total confusion would reign once again.

Being a retired bus and coach driver, I

occasionally take the publication 'Classic Bus', which comes out every other month. The penultimate paragraph of a piece about York in issue 145 strays into motor-bikes, a mode of transport I have been 'into' since the mid-1950s. Mention is made of a firm in York called 'Sheppee', which "built steam lorries from 1908 to 1914" using "steam at 900 psi". I have never heard of this firm, so it may have been one of the many which were into and out of motor building quickly in the early 20th Century. The piece goes on to say that this firm "went on to build steam motor-cycles". I have never before heard of anyone building steam motor-cycles, and neither have friends who have been into bikes longer than I. Can anyone kindly provide us with more information? We would be very interested to learn.

In issue 206, I did a double-take at the photo on page 11 of the ERF with the TJM number, as those registration letters (JM) were allocated to Westmorland until the 1970s. Drifts 10 ft deep over Shap seems a slight exaggeration, on page 30, as I can remember back to the end of the 1940s, but can't remember them being so high.

I had occasionally to drive the 'Green Goddesses' during the Fire Brigade strike of the late 1970s, so I have an interest in the comments on page 32. Did these appliances have baffles in the water tank? The Goddesses seemed not to be so equipped and they were very unstable, both front to back and side-to-side. I wish I'd had some Milbrook experience.

In my locality, the famous transport café was 'The Jungle', which sat at the side of the A6, some eight miles north of Kendal. The site, which is now a caravan depot, was

well-sheltered from the prevailing weather by undulating countryside and woodland. The tea and dishwater were of similar colour and consistency and temperature, but I can't remember anyone being ill from drinking there.

Also on the west side of the A6, but two miles further north, was the café at the summit. This establishment consisted of two elderly single-deck buses, joined back-to-back and, as it was exposed on all sides, there was absolutely no shelter here.

After the M6 was opened from Carnforth to Penrith in the autumn of 1970, most long distance lorries deserted the A6 almost immediately. After all, who in their right mind would want to cross the Westmoreland fells on a single-carriageway road, which ascended to 1,400 ft, when the journey could now be made on a motorway which only reached a height of 1,000 ft.

Of course, this caused The Jungle's demise, the two buses at the summit having gone in the mid-1960s. Infrequent and spasmodic bus services used the A6 route 'over the top' until the turn of the millennium, but a regular daily service between Kendal and Penrith began at very short notice early in December 2015 and ran until the middle of February 2016. Part of the A591 through the centre of the Lake District had been washed away by a severe storm in the Thirlmere area and this temporary service maintained a link to Keswick from the south, with a change of bus at Penrith.

The views of Shap Fell from the upper deck on a good clear day greatly exceeded the views I used to get from the cab when I drove buses over there.

Alan Wilson, Kendal.

LOOKING BACK

I have just finished reading this month's issue of Vintage Roadscene. Another excellent issue and, in particular, I thoroughly enjoyed the article by Malcom Bates, 'Looking Back. In Anger or Regret?' He wrote it like he was sitting in the same room as me and telling it to me. It was written with seriousness and humour combined.

It made me chuckle when he referred to "reading the wrong magazine, 'Carp World' is on the next shelf down". I have to tell him that where I buy all my lorry magazines (all Kelsey publications), they are on the bottom shelf; well, in my W H Smiths shops they are and the Road haulage Archive series are even further tucked up at the rear. This I find a bit silly, as I should imagine that the majority of readers are like me, in their

senior years and stooping down low to get at these can be a painful job for a lot of us, that maybe like me suffering with arthritis and other mobility problems. **(We'll mention this to the distribution people... – Ed)**

When he refers to the Blackwall Tunnel being two-way traffic, I also remember that. When I reached the tender age of 21 in November 1968, I was able to drive HGVs. I never had to go for a separate driving test in those days; you just had your car licence upgraded and I was sent out in a 10 ton Albion Claymore from our depot in Belvedere, Kent to our Stratford depot. I went through the tunnel both ways, and that was on a Friday afternoon, and never had a mishap, plus it was important able to double de-clutch as well. Joy-o-joy!

In all seriousness, I do worry what will

happen to my large collection of photos, which I have obtained over the years. I also have loads stored on my computer as well. I do not see my family wanting them and my son who is an art car driver does not seem interested in them and can't see the point in taking photos of HGVs while he is on the road. Today's vehicles are tomorrow's vintage scenes.

I will now, as Malcolm says in his article, put my memories into words on paper and may send you some in eventually.

Keep up the good work on your magazine and looking forward to more great stuff from you in 2017.

Ron Waghorne, Welling, Kent

Thanks Ron. We look forward to hearing more from you...

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LEONARD GREEN'S RARE AUSTIN

Here are some pictures of a rare Austin tractor unit, one of only two built (GPO Telephones had the other one), although some others were badged Morris, pictured at Leonard Green Haulage, well-known for operating ERFs. I drove for the company for 3½ years, 1967-70 – there's also a picture of my Dennis Maxim with Perkins V8 engine.

That is the Austin poking out of the garage doors; we always called it 'the Sheerline', but I think it was just the drivers' name for it, after the Austin car. It is also seen from the rear, behind the ERF. This was the first artic I drove at Greens – 12 drops Leeds. It came as a demo tractor at the opening of Green's new garage mid-1960s.

There are some more pictures of Green's garage open day. Colin Green on the left, Leonard Green Jnr on the right and I think the man in the middle is from ERF. Also in the picture is the BMC training unit outfit. (David M Green)

Also, here is a picture taken at the South Yorkshire Transport Museum, of the real Sheffield United Tours AEC Reliance/Plaxton shown on the model pages.

Alan Graham, via e-mail.







GEORGE ASKEW HAY, STRAW & CHAFF MERCHANT

I was most interested to see, right at the beginning of Vintage Roadscene issue 206, the picture of the Bedford using a Telehoist bale loader, as I rode in that very lorry some 60 years ago.

From memory the registration number was AMU 140, but I wouldn't put money on it. The driver, who was also laying the bales, was a chap called Charlie Bell. I don't know if the gent in the smart hat and coat was from Telehoist, but is certainly wasn't George Askew or his son Dennis.

My grandfather, Charles Kett who was descended from the Ketts of Norfolk, drove for Askews for 40 years, from 1930 to 1970, when he died just a month before his 65th birthday and a happy retirement. Every school holiday, I used to travel with him to farms in Essex, Suffolk, Hertfordshire and

Bedfordshire and delivering down into Kent, Sussex and Surrey.

Charlie Bell had a son of about my age, who also used to come in the holidays and, if they were running together, I would ride with him in the Bedford as it had a bench seat.

The arm of the Telehoist was usually slung under the body, pushed in from the back under the tail board. After connecting it to the hydraulic pump under the side rave, a strap that you can just see, was connected back over the cross-piece on the loader. When a bale was placed on it, the strap tightened and activated the pump; the bale would fall off when it got to the top. To switch it on in the first place, with the engine running, there was a lever retro-fitted in the cab and, either the idle button was turned up, or a piece of wood wedged between the throttle pedal and the underneath of the dash, to ensure the loader did not go up too fast or too slow.

The 'platform' over the cab was usually called the 'ladder' and that was actually quite a small one, as others went right to the front, with stays straight down to the bumpers. Incidentally, the bales were usually quite light and you would have had a job to hang a five ton load on that sized body.

There is a lot more I could write about the 15 years I enjoyed being on Askews, as I grew older, becoming a driver's mate in the hay and straw business (known as a Trouncer), and even doing a bit of driving towards the end, having learned to drive on a Leyland Comet 616 PMP which I have a photo of.

Let me know if you would like me to write more.

David Trumble, Bicknacre, Essex.

Yes please, David, I'm sure we'd all be interested to read more and your stories about working for this interesting business.

MORE ON TROJAN

As a small addition to the Trojan entry in 'The Rare Ones', in the early 1950s, Trojan tried to market a battery-electric version of the standard van, but apparently sold very few. I have recently added a catalogue for this model to the 'Words and Machines Road Transport Collection

(Ref: MSS.457/T/52) in the Modern Records Centre of the University of Warwick Library, Coventry CV4 7AL.

According to this eight page illustrated booklet, a battery-electric van was not a new feature in the Trojan range. Initial experimental work commenced 1938-9 and "a substantial number of vehicles were

built during the early period of the last war, these vehicles still being in operation". It was claimed that a two-speed and reverse gearbox with a clutch made manoeuvring very easy and "without the 'snatch' frequently the case with electric vehicles".

Richard Storey, Kenilworth.

HAYWARDS TRANSPORT

I have spotted an error on page 59 in the Mick Bailey's 70th Birthday Celebration article. In the second column, second paragraph, line four, 'Haywood' should read Hayward.

I have known Haywards Transport in Walsall for over 20 years, they are my support company in the Midlands, allowing me to park in their garage the night before any funeral in the Walsall/Bloxwich areas. I have also stayed there if it is too far for me to drive home after a funeral in the north. Haywards operate 24 hours per day so it doesn't matter when I arrive, someone is available to take



me to the Premier Inn and collect me in the morning. Once they sent a service van to collect me, which was kitted out for abnormal load escort duty with big 'Abnormal Load' signs. It was quite appropriate, because later that day I did the final journey of a man who was thought to be over 35 stones in his coffin.

I hope that you don't mind the correction. Malcolm Ranieri included some excellent detail about A Hingley Transport, but I was disappointed that Hayward was wrongly spelled.

David Hall, Vintage Lorry Funerals

NEXT MONTH... TANKERS

LORRIES OF 1965

ALBION FIRE ENGINES

WORKSHOP TALES CAUGHT IN TIME

WELL-KNOWN OPERATORS

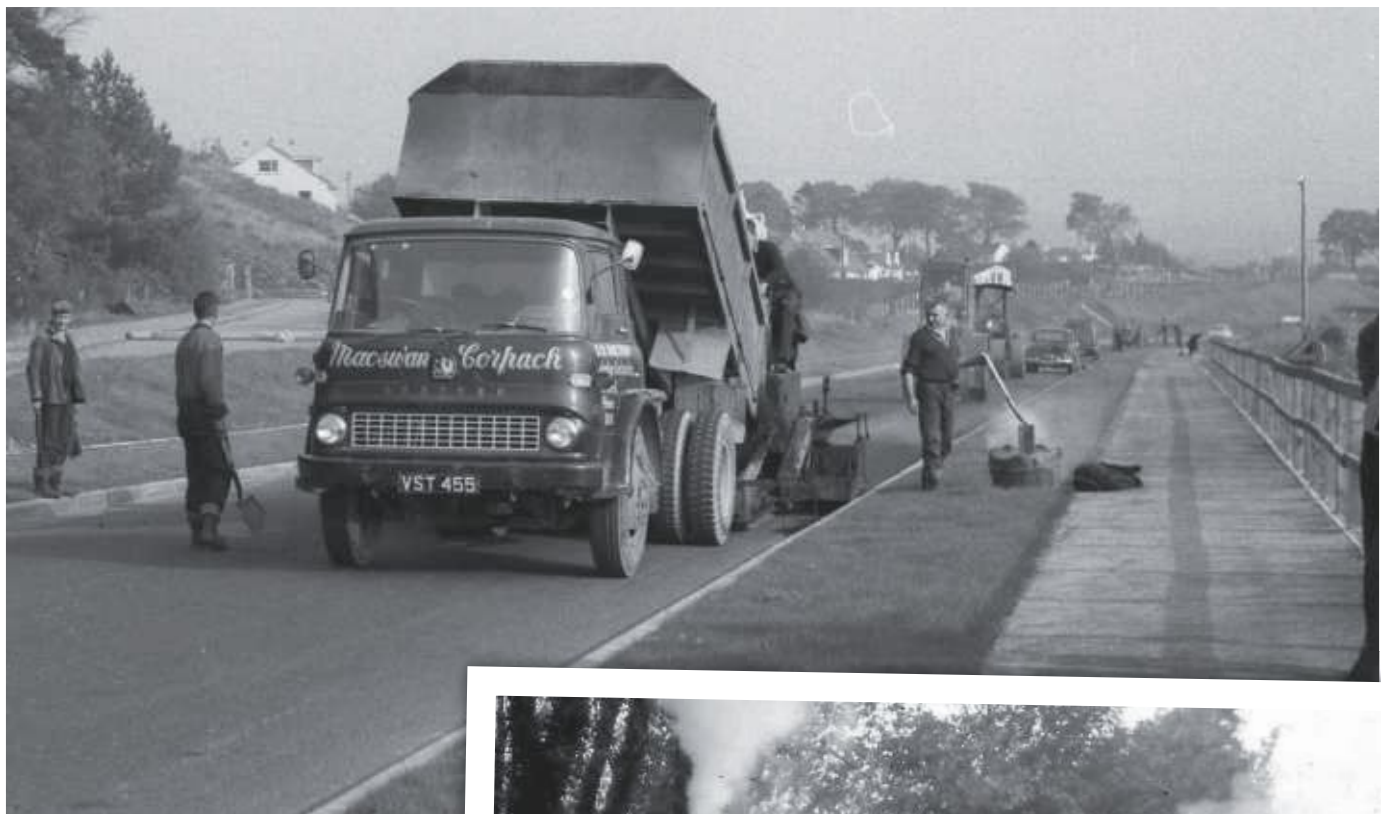


PLUS ALL THE USUAL FEATURES

MARCH 2017 ISSUE ON SALE FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17TH

* Circumstances might cause the planned contents to change

Turning up the Heat



An old negative turned up in the Stevens-Stratten Vintage Roadscene Picture Library, which I just had to share with you, as a follow-up to last month's 'Roadworks' Scenes Past. It's not the best 'image', but a steam waggon still working in the road in the 1950s or early 1960s is just irresistible. You can 'date' the picture by the glimpse of a Bedford TA Series tipper beyond the smoke and steam.

The roadworks contractor W & J Glossop Ltd was well-known for running a Sentinel Super or DG into the post-war years, I believe in the North-west and Wales. A steam waggon would seem a good idea when a tanker-load of tar needs to be kept warm and liquid. This is not a tar tanker, though.

This Sentinel is working with a 'burner', being used to melt and scrape the surface off the tarmac road, with an elevator at the rear loading the material removed into a tipper. Pretty messy, unpleasant and not that safe either – presumably why this method is no longer used. The ideal vehicle to pull such a burner would be able to inch along the road in a very low gear, which is where the Sentinel comes in in this case. The tanks you can see would contain water for the steam waggon and fuel for the burner.

I can remember seeing a burner like this



in action around the turn of the 1960s. A company called 'East Anglian Roadstone & Transport' – 'EARAT' to its friends, had a depot in Pakefield, South Lowestoft, which I passed on my way to junior school.

This company used a Scammell Pioneer, registered in the late 1940s, if I remember rightly, in a mainly red livery, which looked very impressive pulling the burner trailer – quite scary close-up for a small boy! The waste tarmac was loaded in EARAT's red Morris-Commercial FV (the one with the 'suicide' doors) or other local operators' tippers.

These days, specialist road planing companies have machines which can scrape the tarmac surface off the road, ready for

a replacement surface to be laid – which doesn't seem nearly as exciting as burning it off....

If anybody has a picture of the EARAT vehicle or Glossop's or any other company's 'burners' in action, I'm sure I'm not the only one who would love to see it...

The other picture here is one that got away from our 'Roadworks' feature. It shows a Bedford TK tipper, VST 455 (Inverness-shire, 1963), of haulage contractor Macswan of Corpach, which is among a sequence of 'Stilltime' pictures showing Scottish timber vehicles. It was photographed tipping tarmac into a paver on a stretch of new road.

(CHC abh071)

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